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SKYBOUND

81

INVINCIBLE

ROBERT KIRKMAN

RYAN OTTLEY

CLIFF RATHBURN

NIKOS KOUTSIS



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ROBERT KIRKMAN
WRITER

RYAN OTTLEY
PENCILER

CLIFF RATHBURN
INKER

NIKOS KOUTSIS
COLORIST

MIKE TORIS
COLOR ASSISTANT

RUS WOOTON
LETTERER

SINA GRACE
EDITOR

COVER BY RYAN OTTLEY & FCO PLASCENCIA
CREATED BY ROBERT KIRKMAN & CORY WALKER



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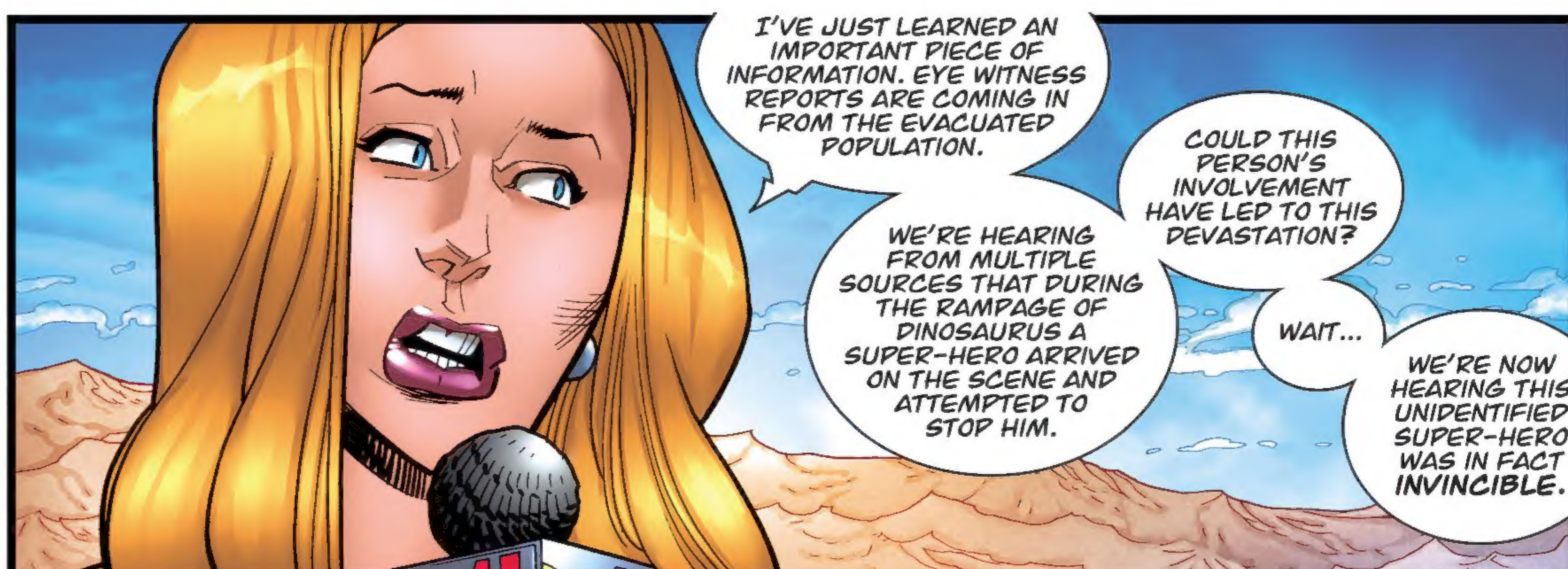
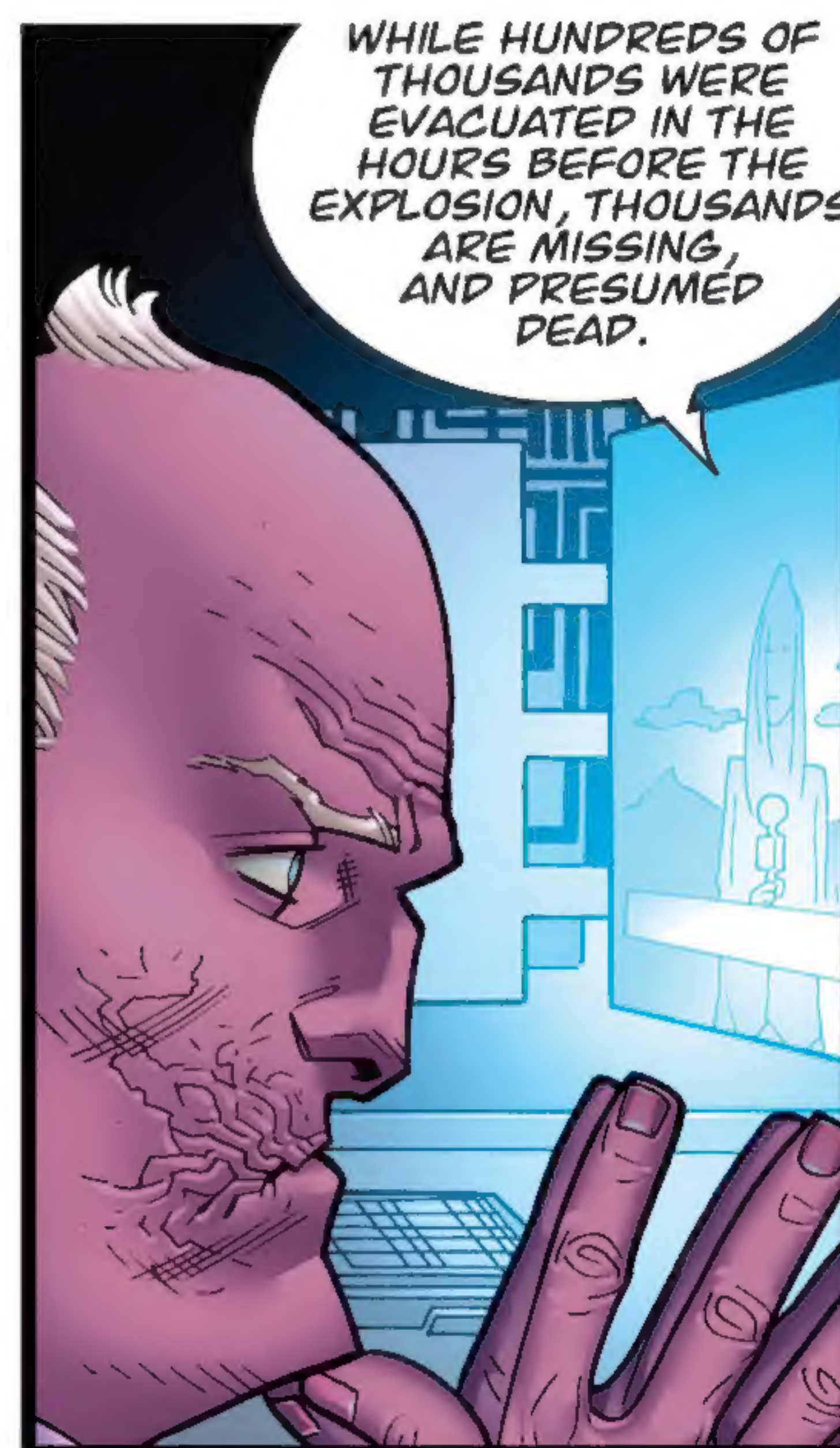
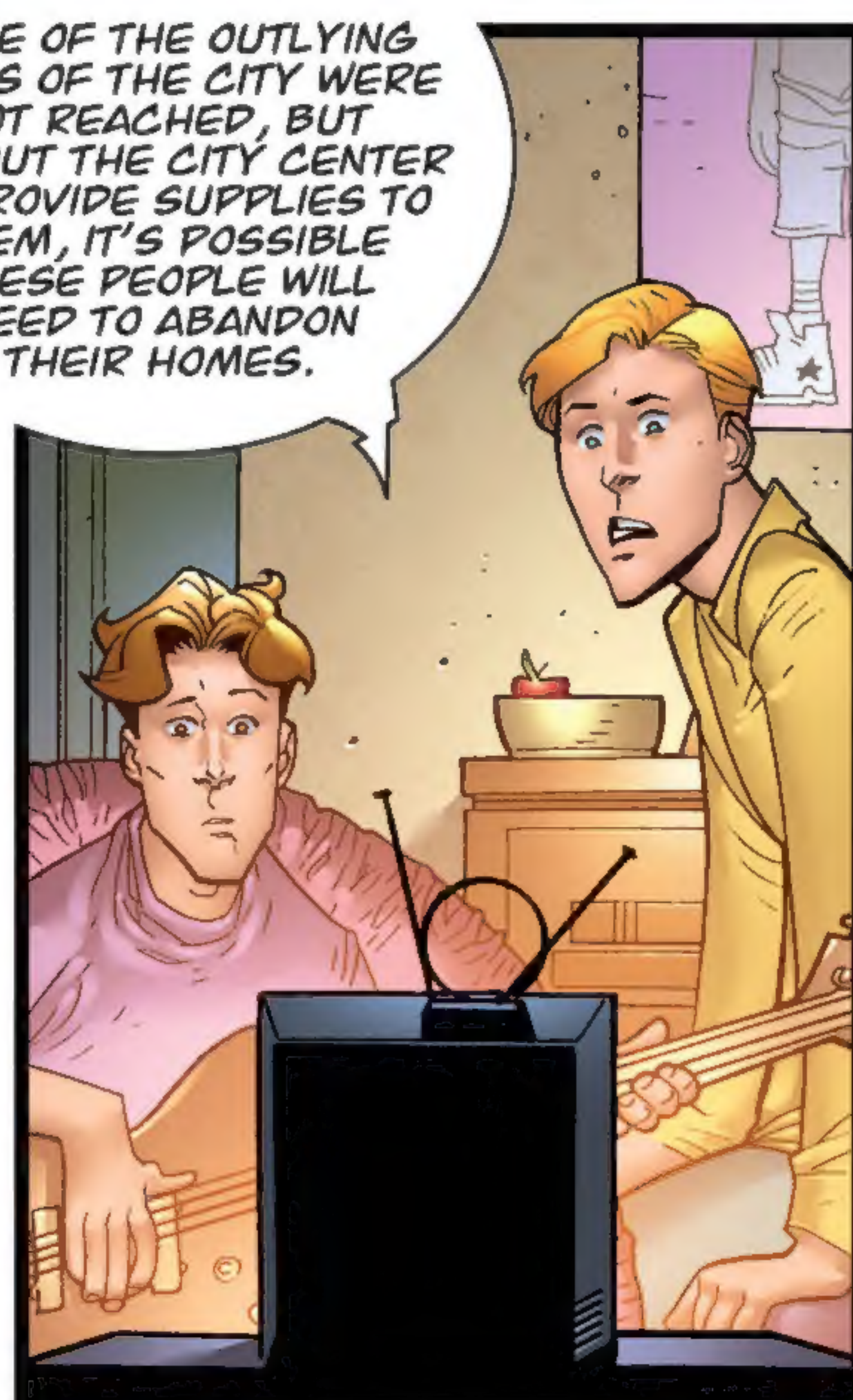
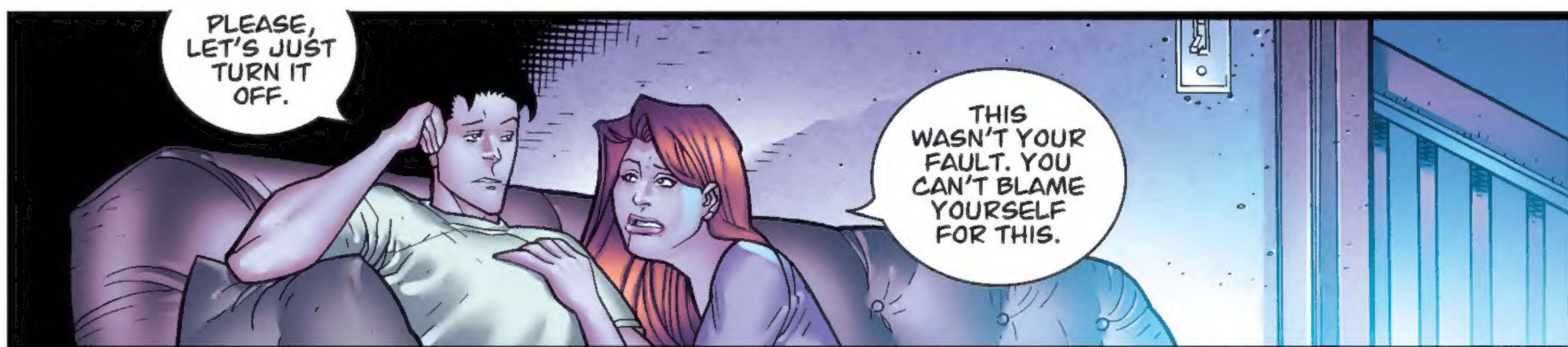
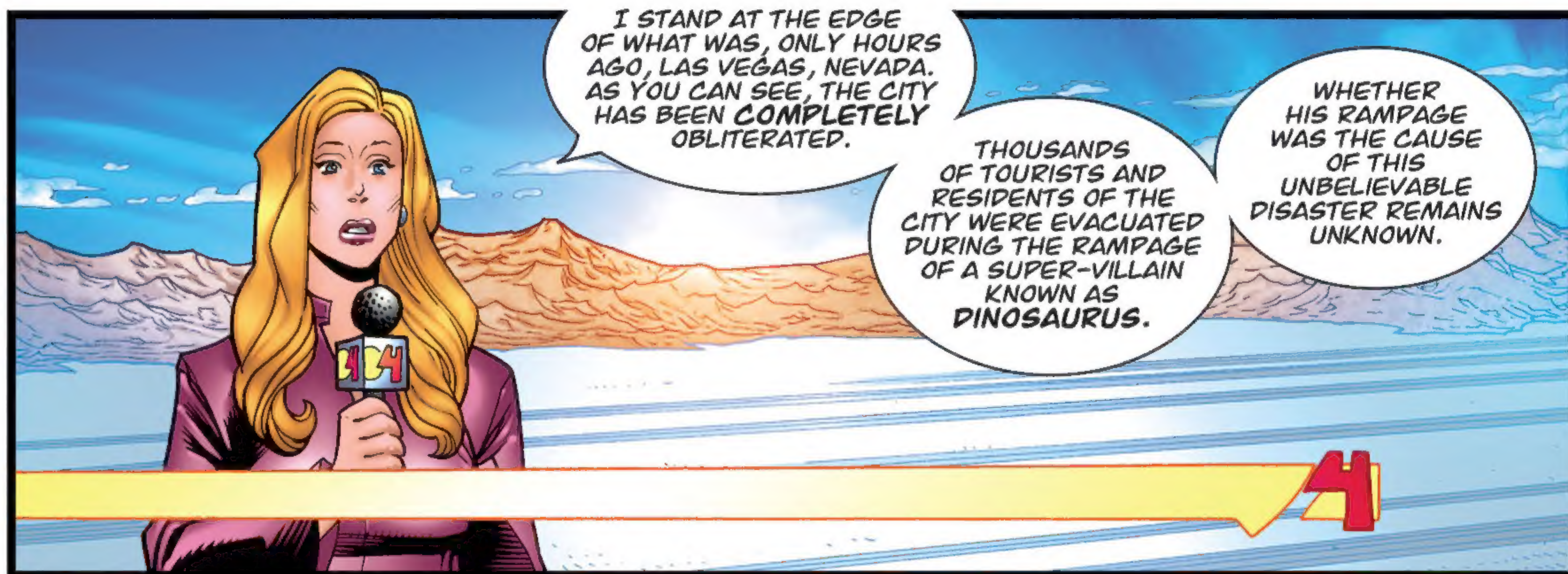
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WHAT?!





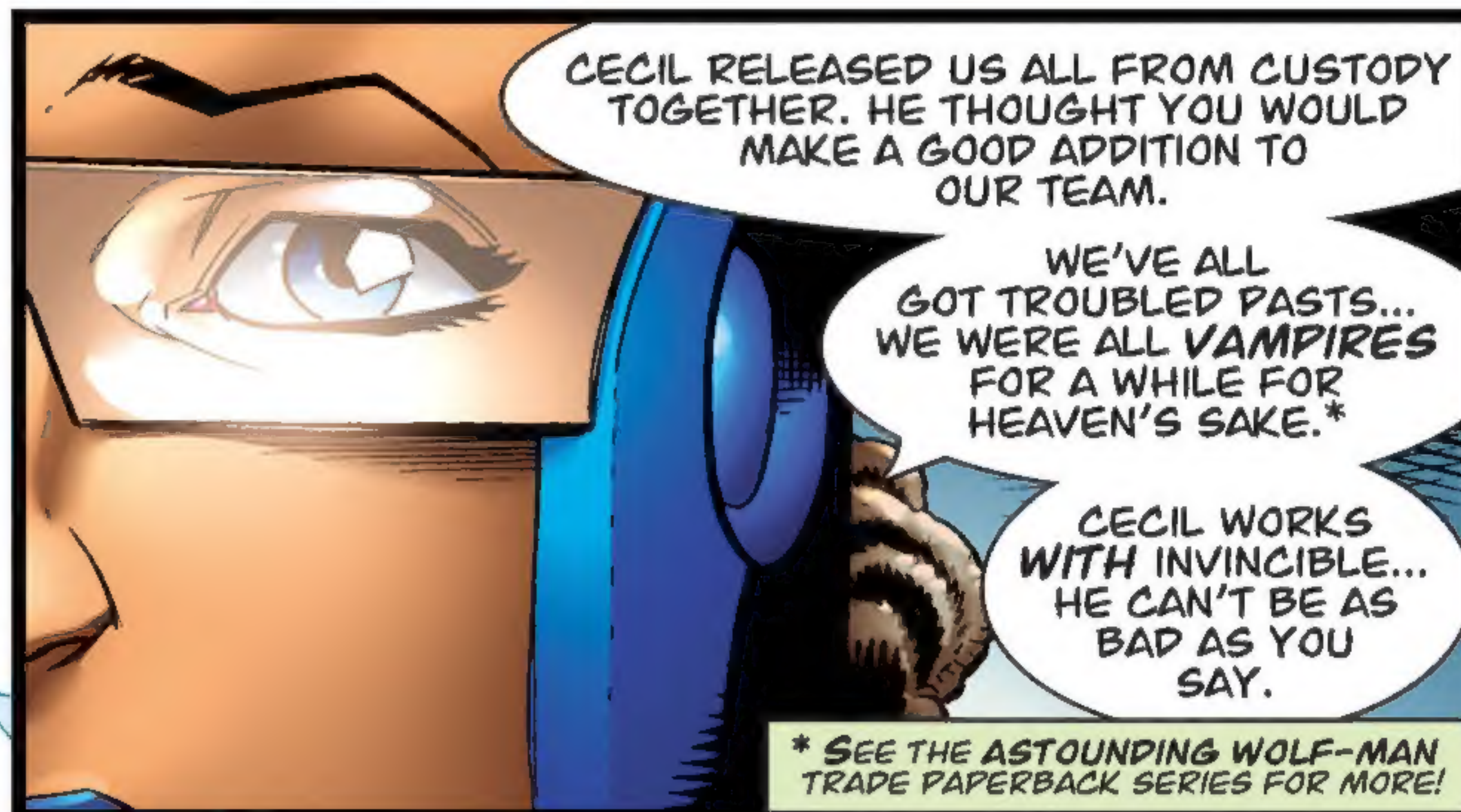
POWERPLEX,
PLEASE...
CALM DOWN.
THIS ISN'T
LIKE YOU
AT ALL.

I KNOW
YOUR HISTORY
WITH INVINCIBLE,
BUT THIS
JUST ISN'T
ACCEPTABLE
BEHAVIOR.

I KNOW... I'M
SORRY, KINETIC.
IT'S JUST, I WASN'T
READY FOR THIS.
WHEN INVINCIBLE
DISAPPEARED FOR
SO LONG, I
THOUGHT IT
WAS OVER.

I'M THANKFUL
THAT YOU GUYS
HAVE TAKEN ME IN,
ALLOWED ME TO JOIN
THE ACTIONEERS...
AND I'M REALLY
TRYING TO CONTROL
MYSELF.

I JUST...
WASN'T
PREPARED.
I'M SORRY IF
I STARTLED
YOU.

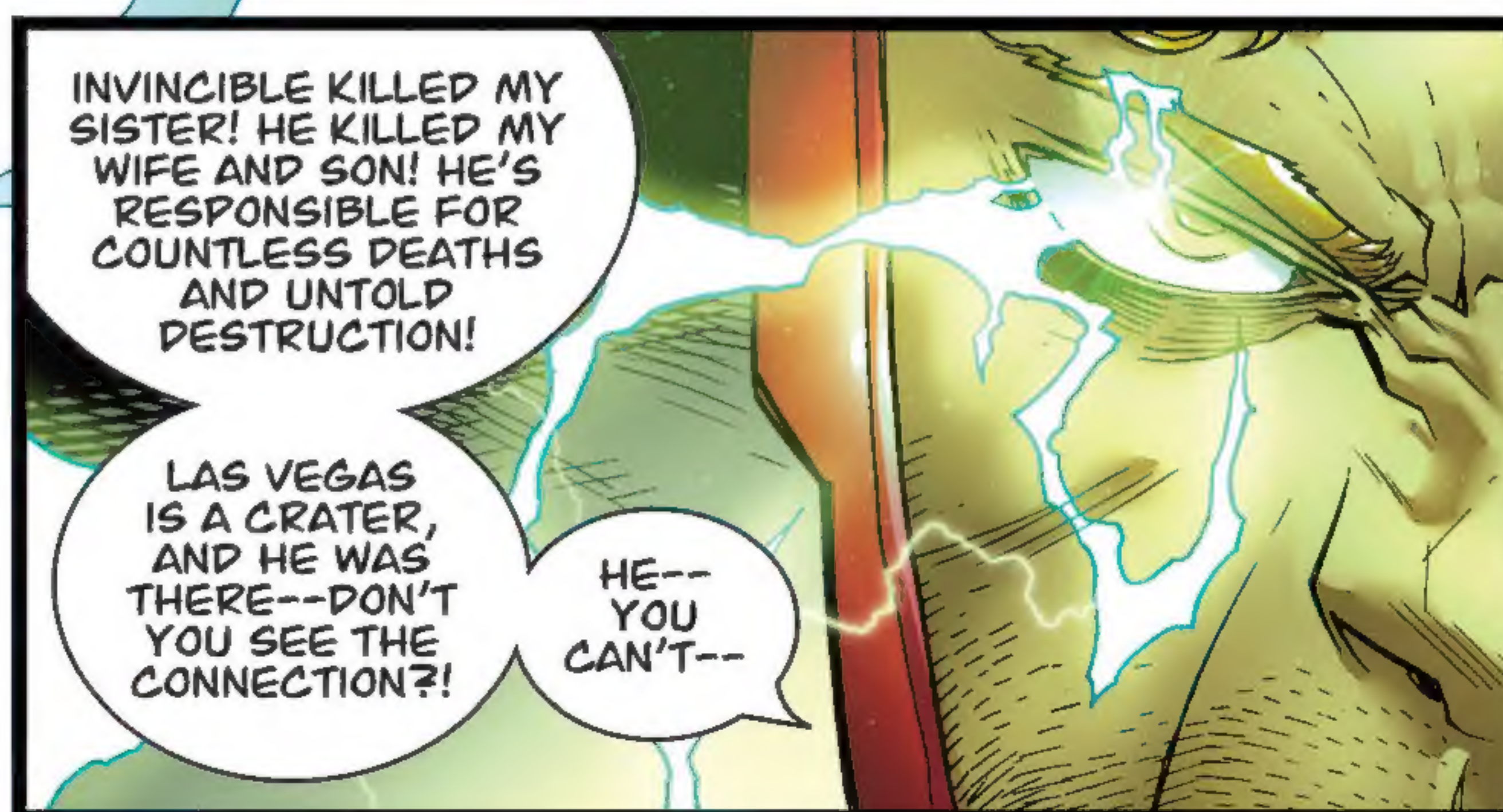


CECIL RELEASED US ALL FROM CUSTODY
TOGETHER. HE THOUGHT YOU WOULD
MAKE A GOOD ADDITION TO
OUR TEAM.

WE'VE ALL
GOT TROUBLED PASTS...
WE WERE ALL VAMPIRES
FOR A WHILE FOR
HEAVEN'S SAKE.*

CECIL WORKS
WITH INVINCIBLE...
HE CAN'T BE AS
BAD AS YOU
SAY.

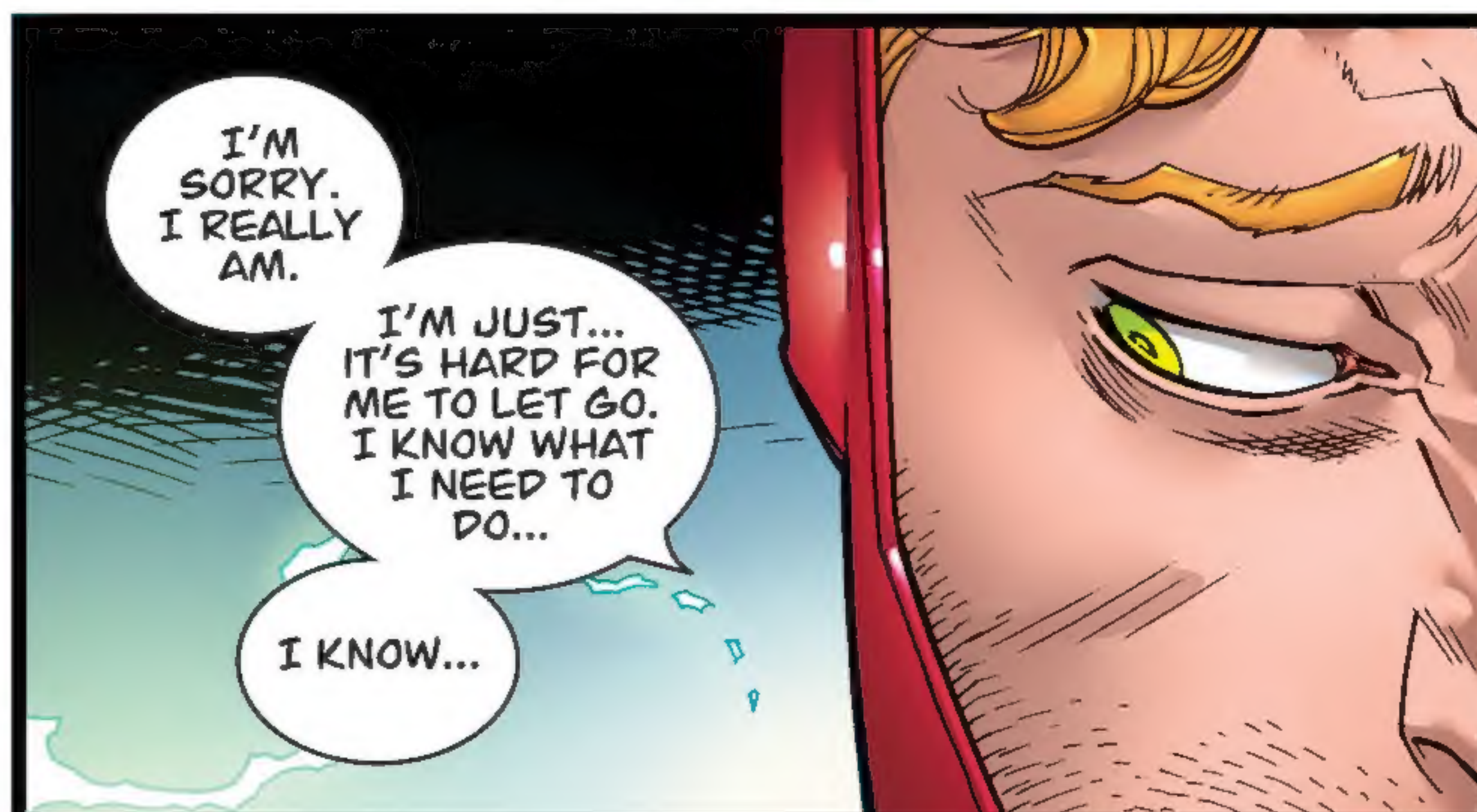
* SEE THE ASTOUNDING WOLF-MAN
TRADE PAPERBACK SERIES FOR MORE!



INVINCIBLE KILLED MY
SISTER! HE KILLED MY
WIFE AND SON! HE'S
RESPONSIBLE FOR
COUNTLESS DEATHS
AND UNTOLD
DESTRUCTION!

LAS VEGAS
IS A CRATER,
AND HE WAS
THERE---DON'T
YOU SEE THE
CONNECTION?!

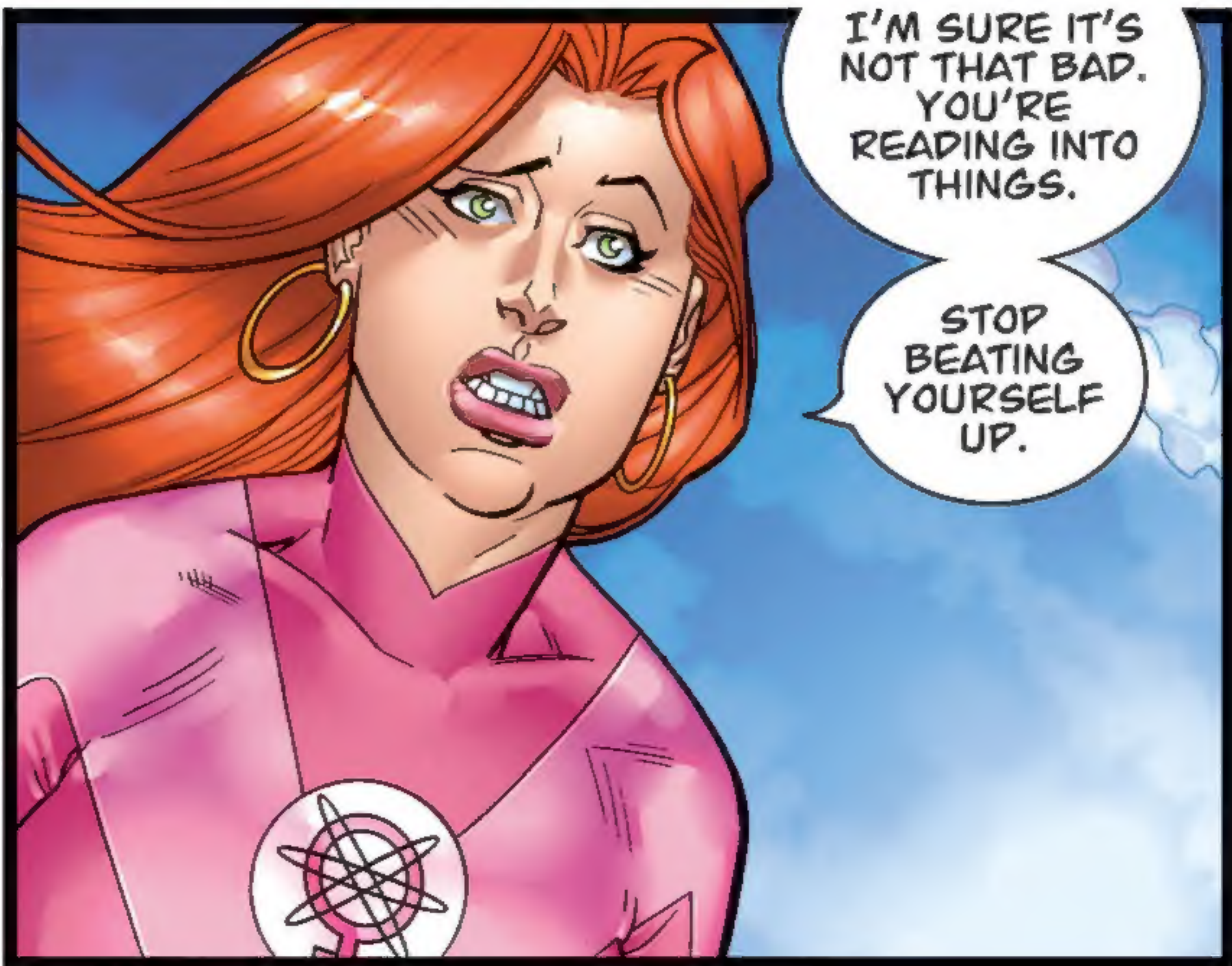
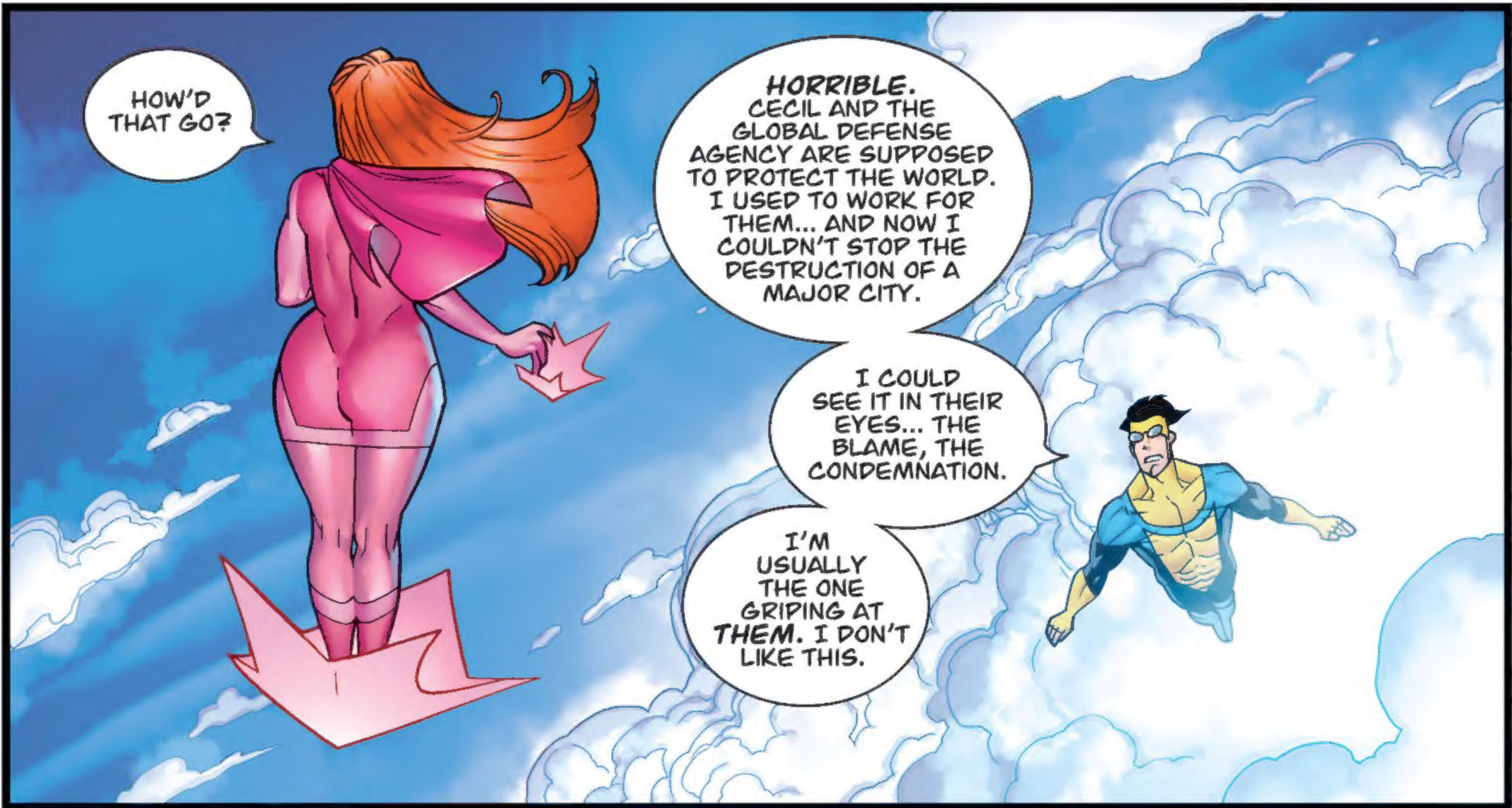
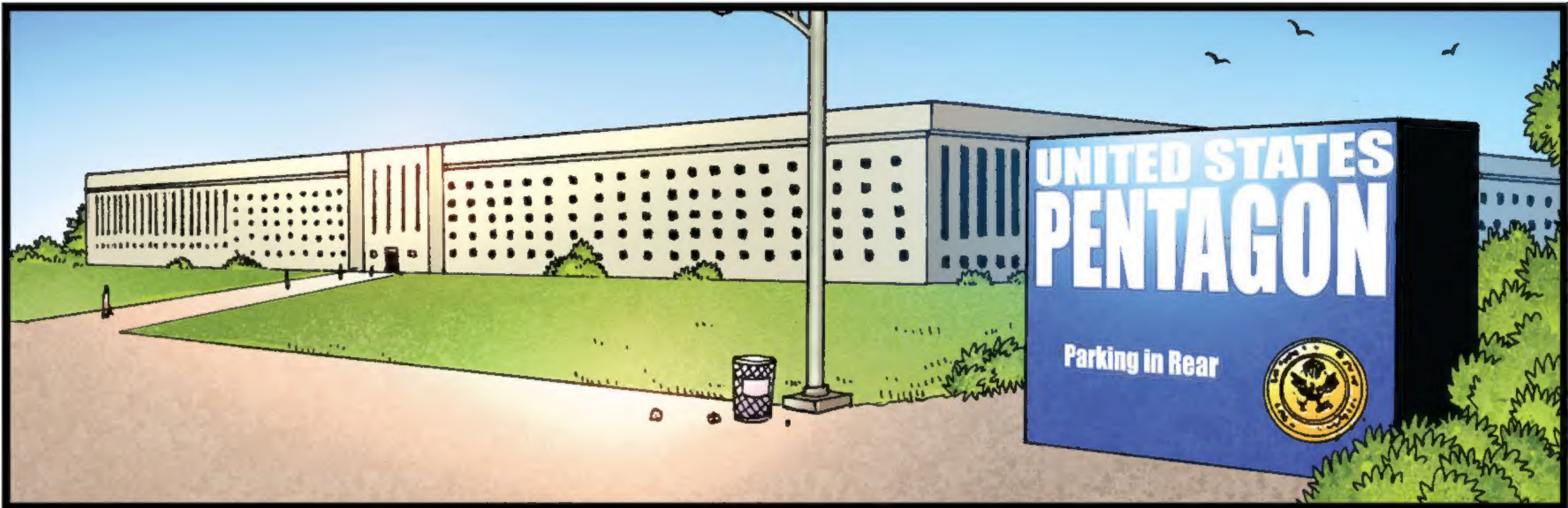
HE--
YOU
CAN'T--

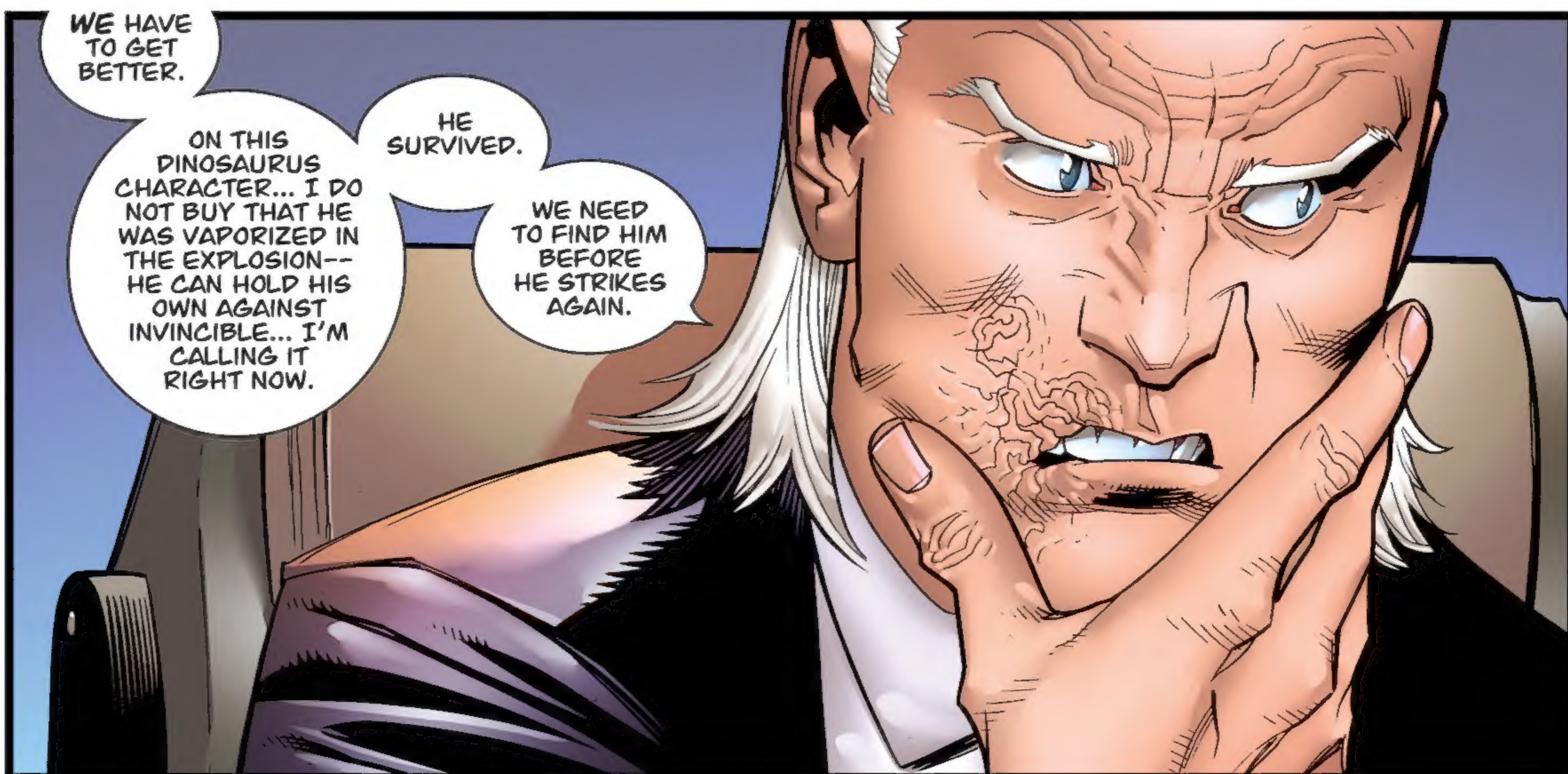


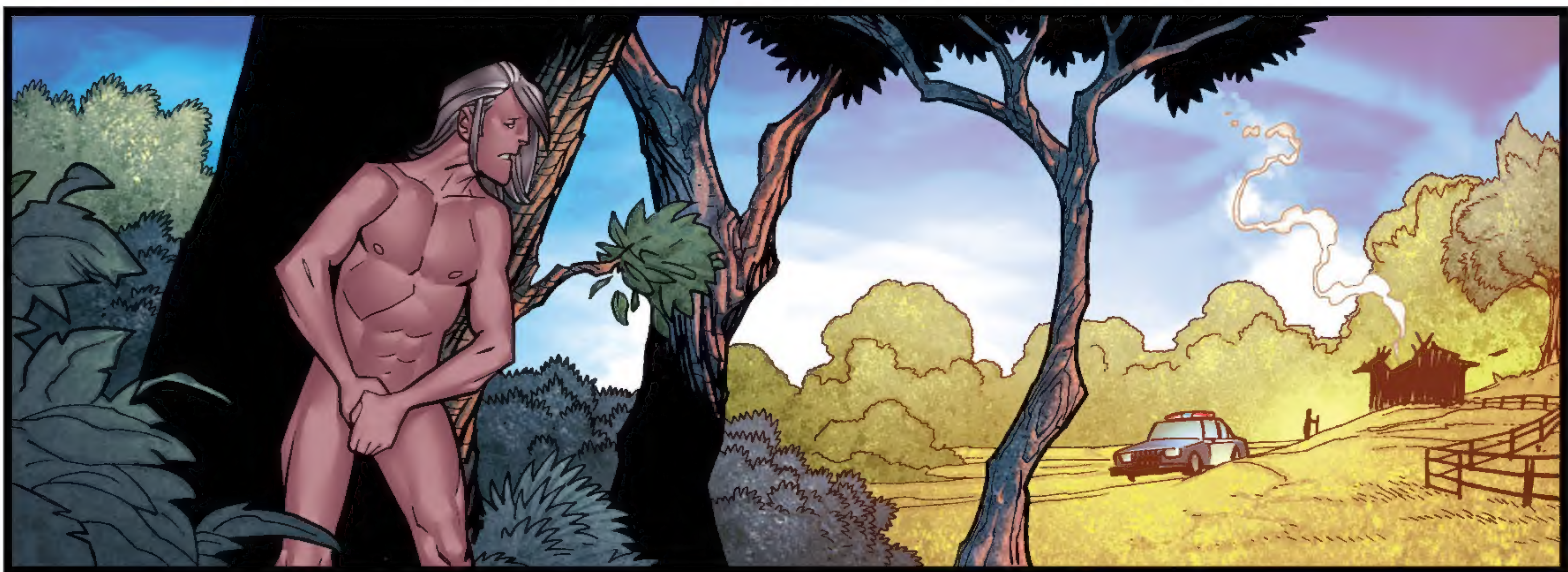
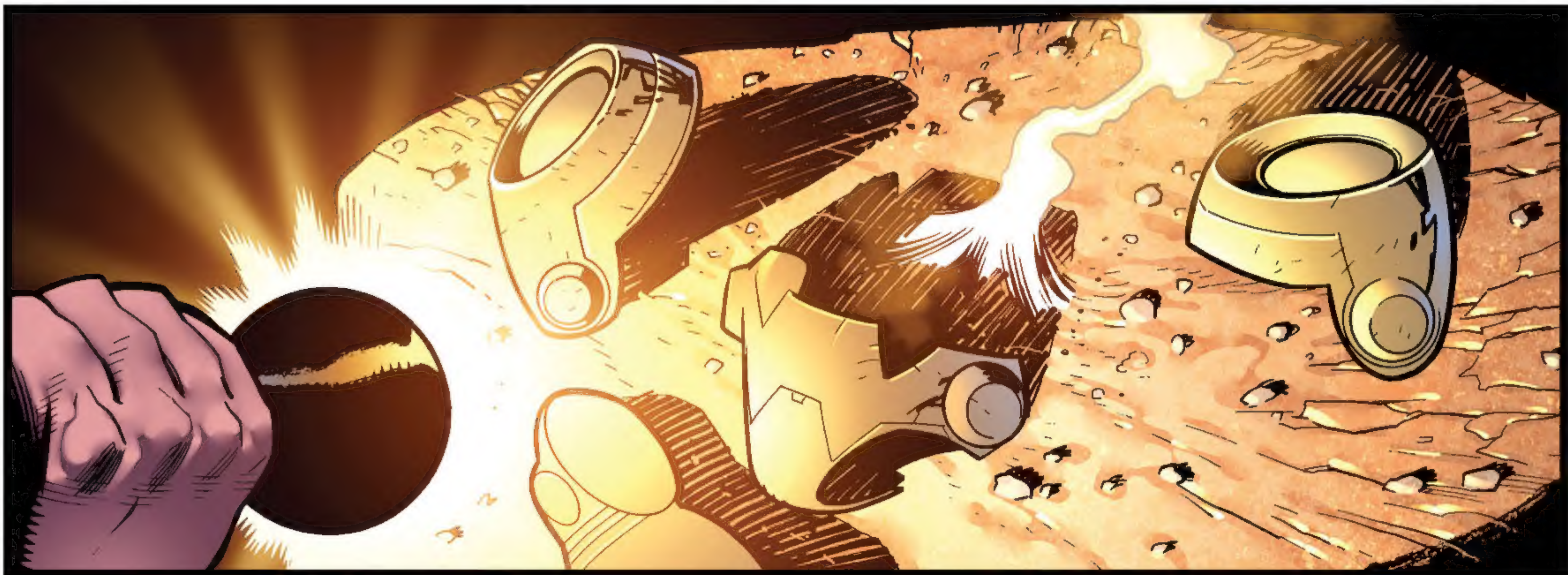
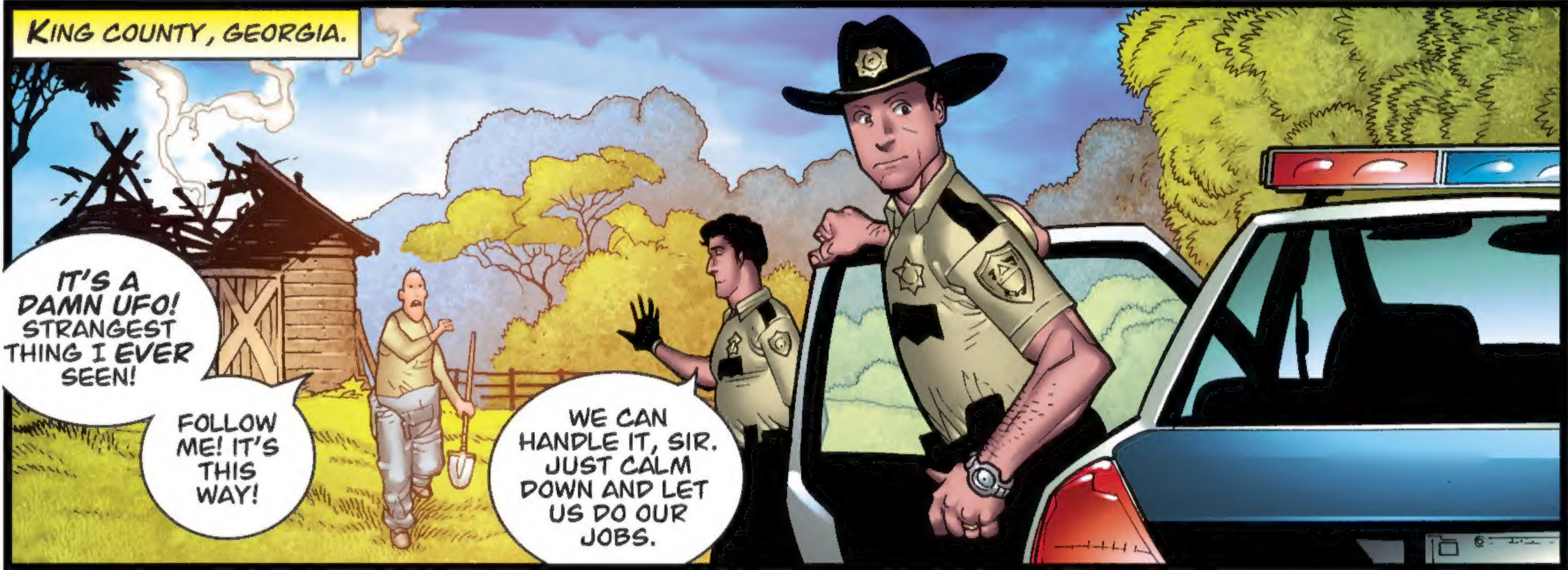
I'M
SORRY.
I REALLY
AM.

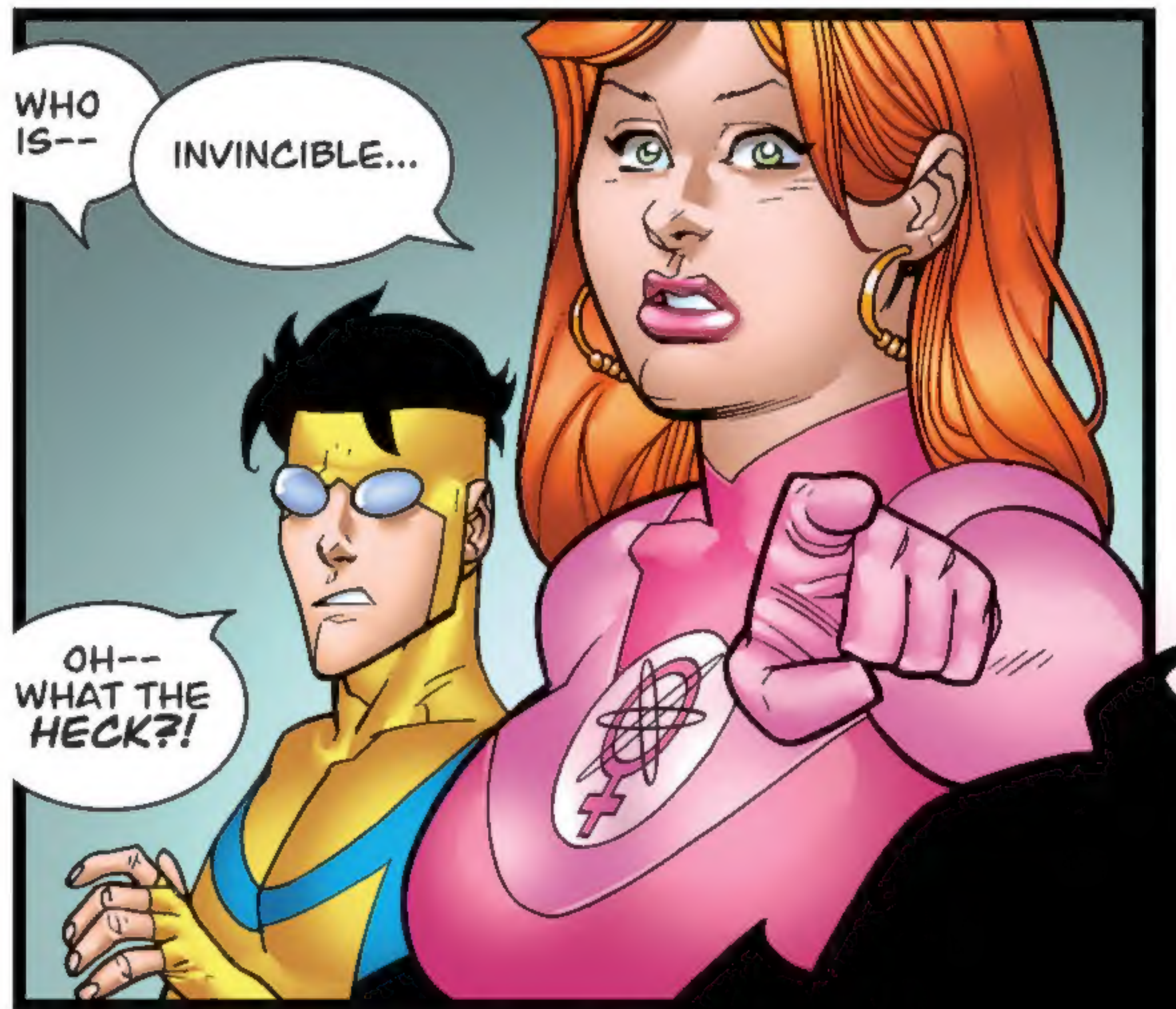
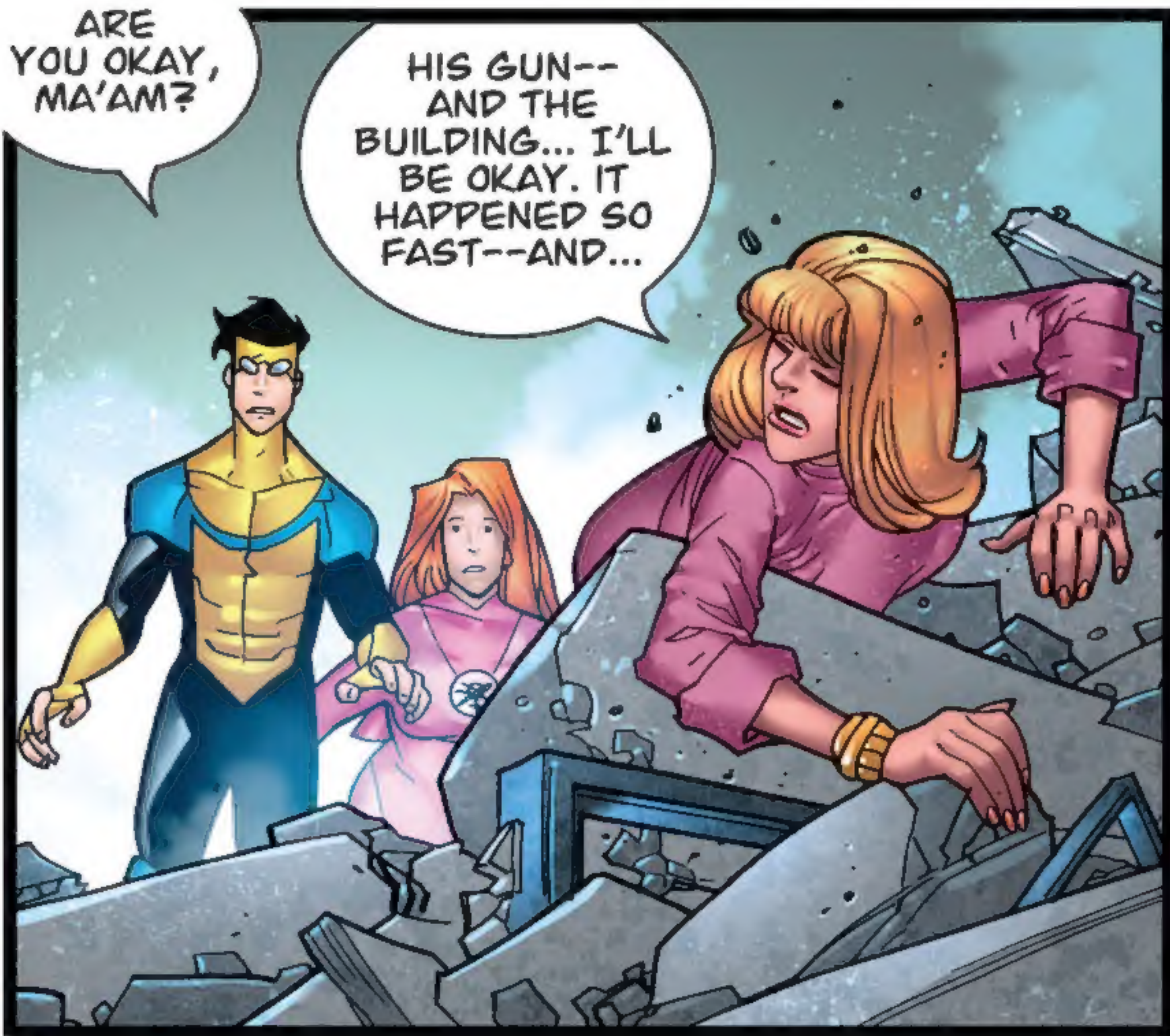
I'M JUST...
IT'S HARD FOR
ME TO LET GO.
I KNOW WHAT
I NEED TO
DO...

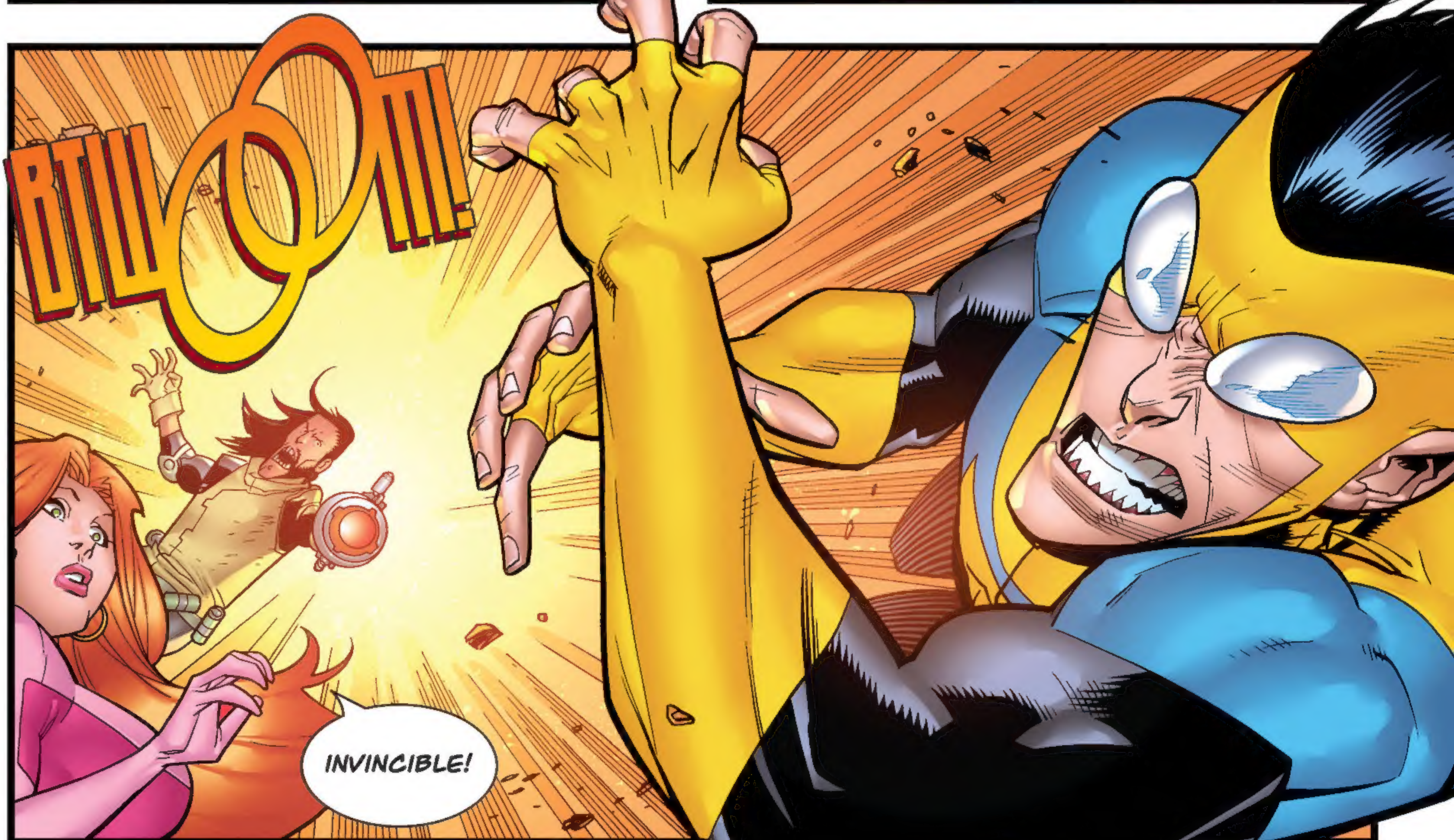
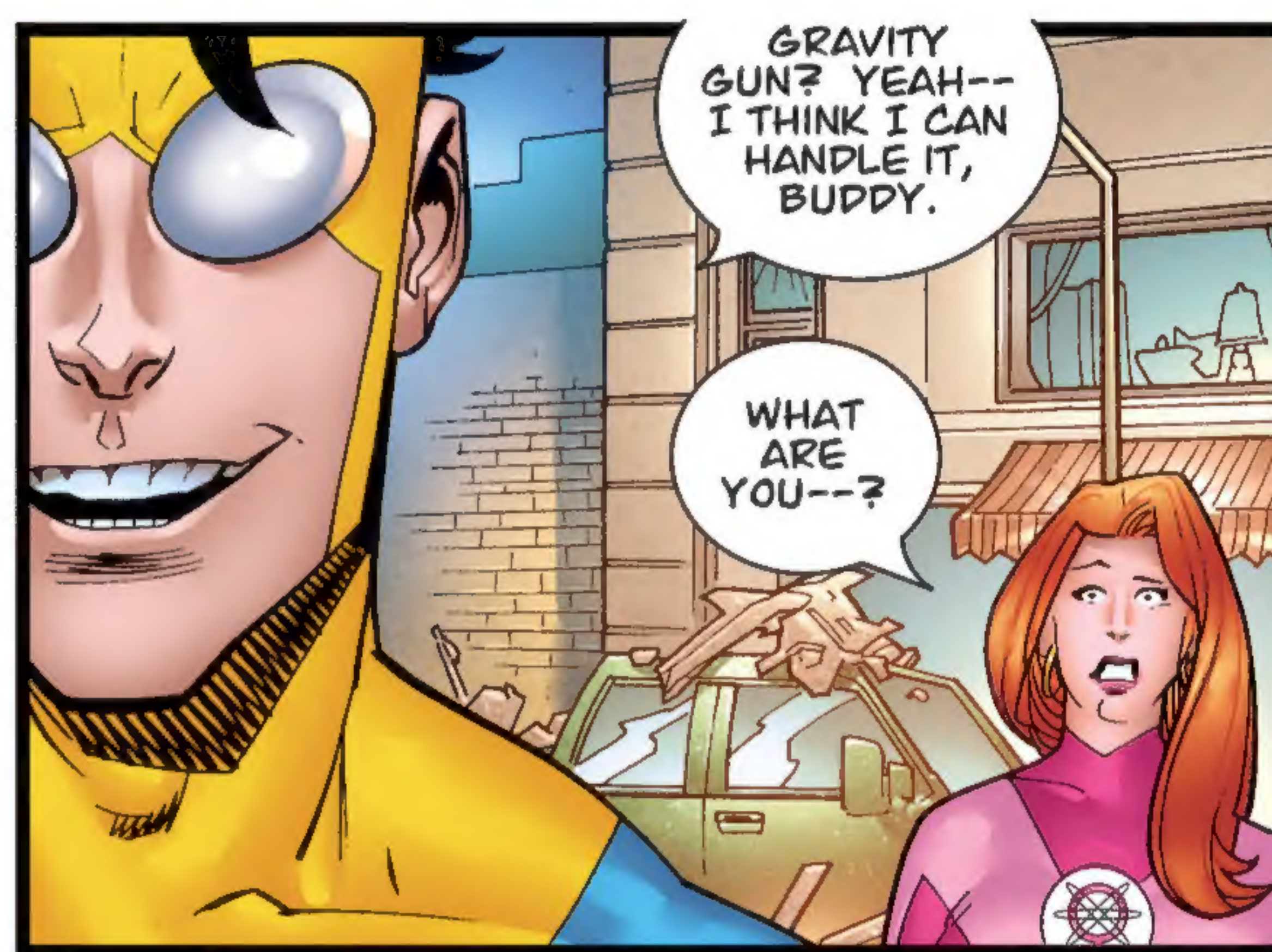
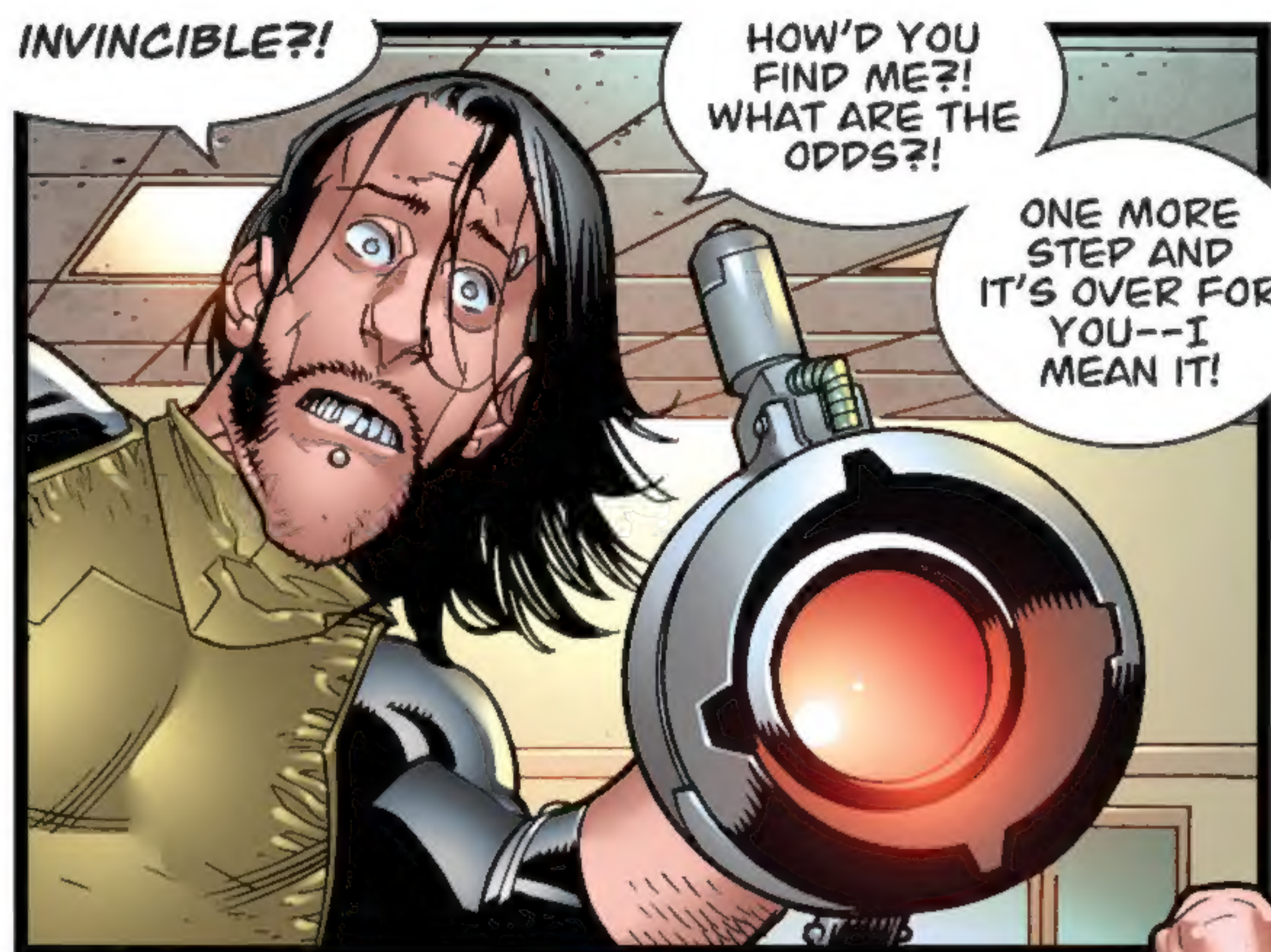
I KNOW...

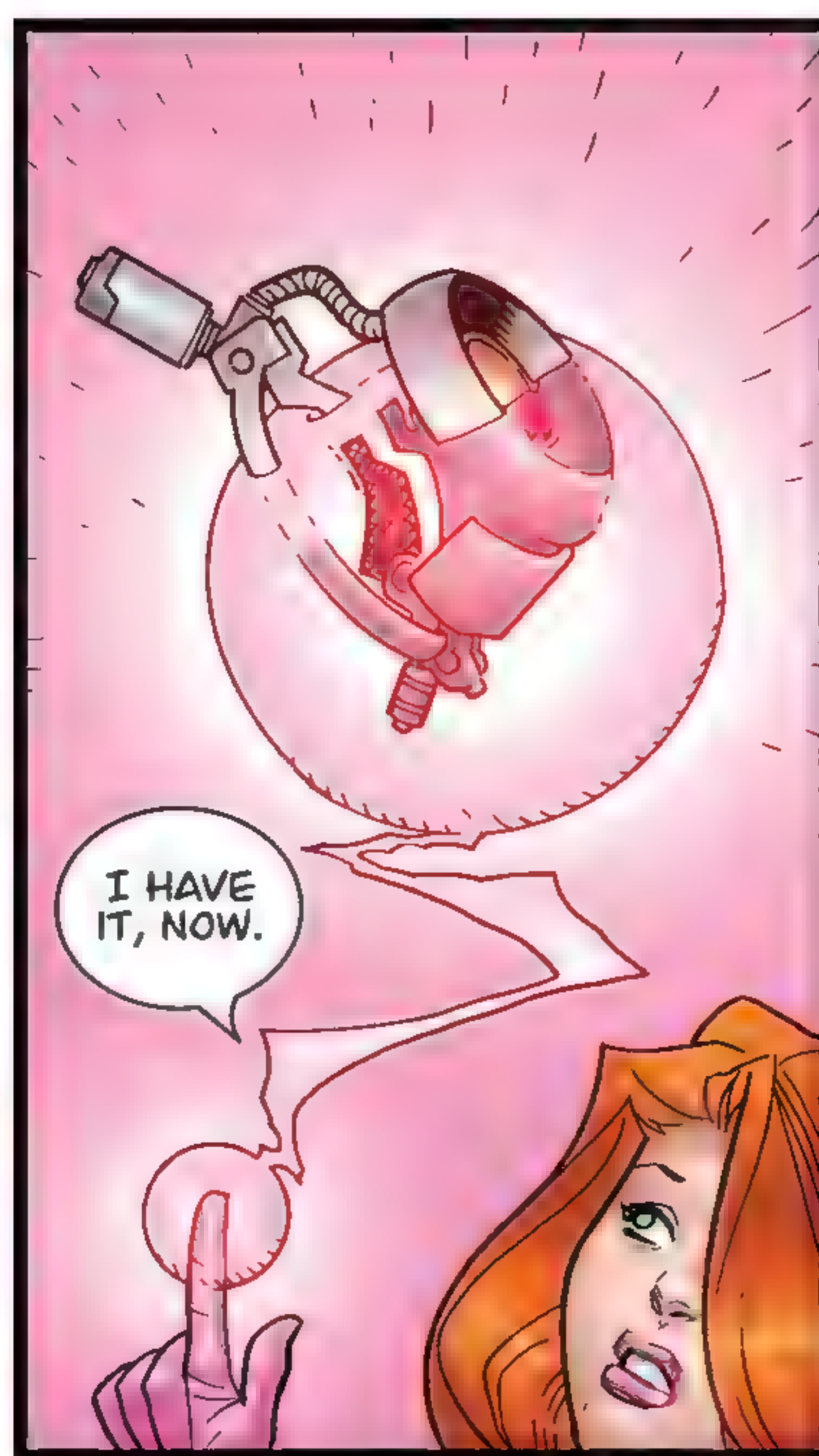
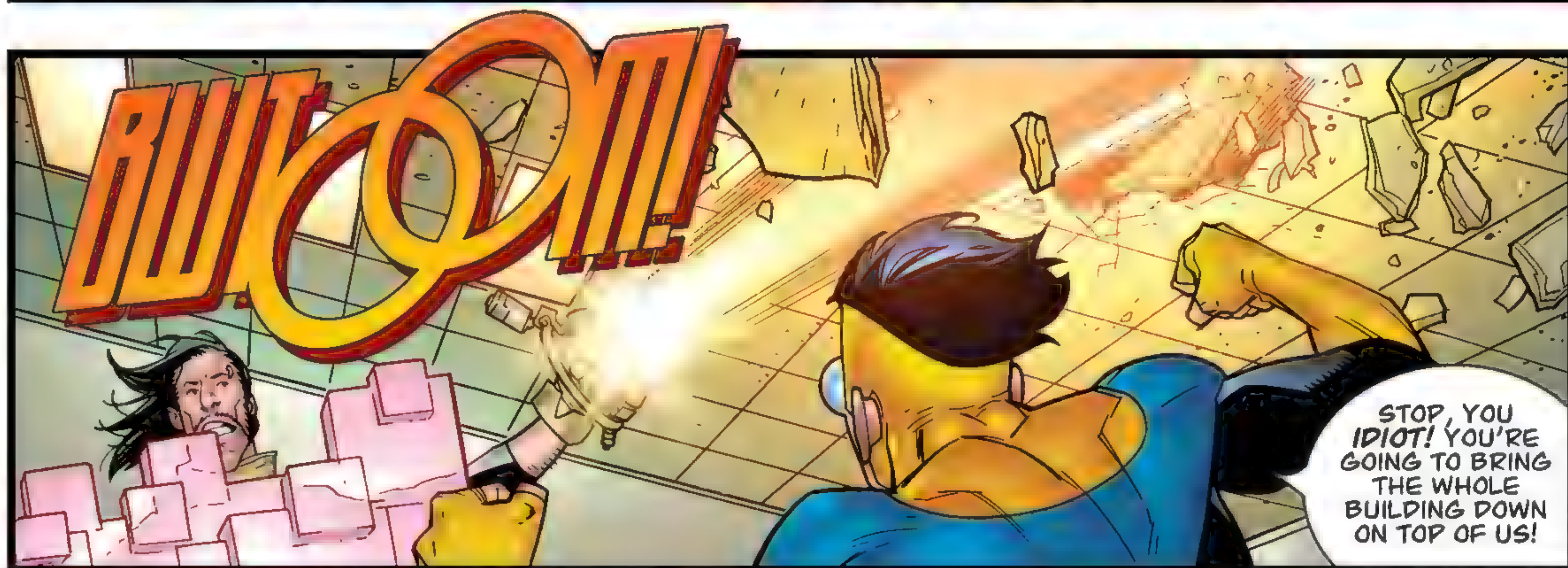
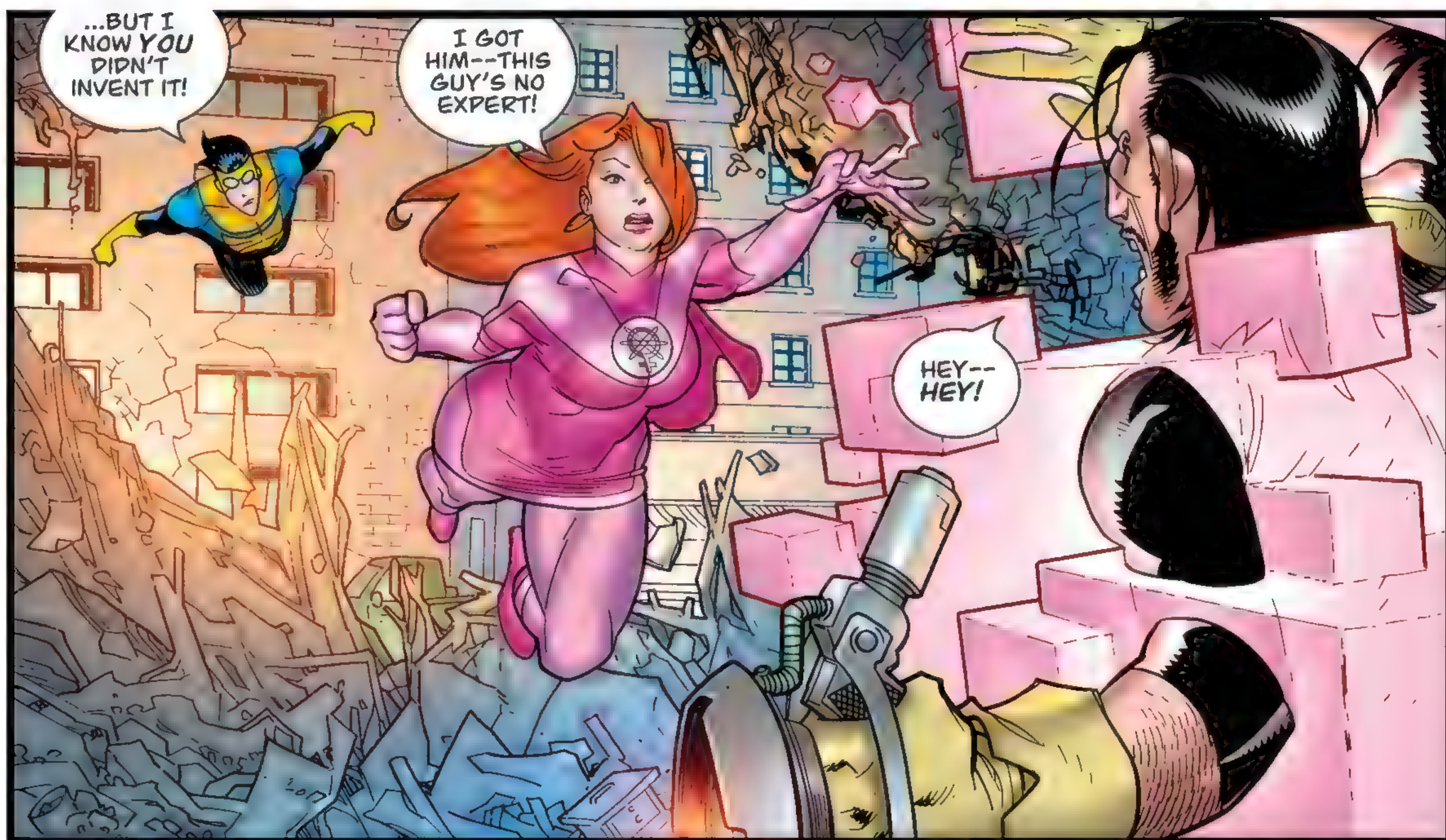


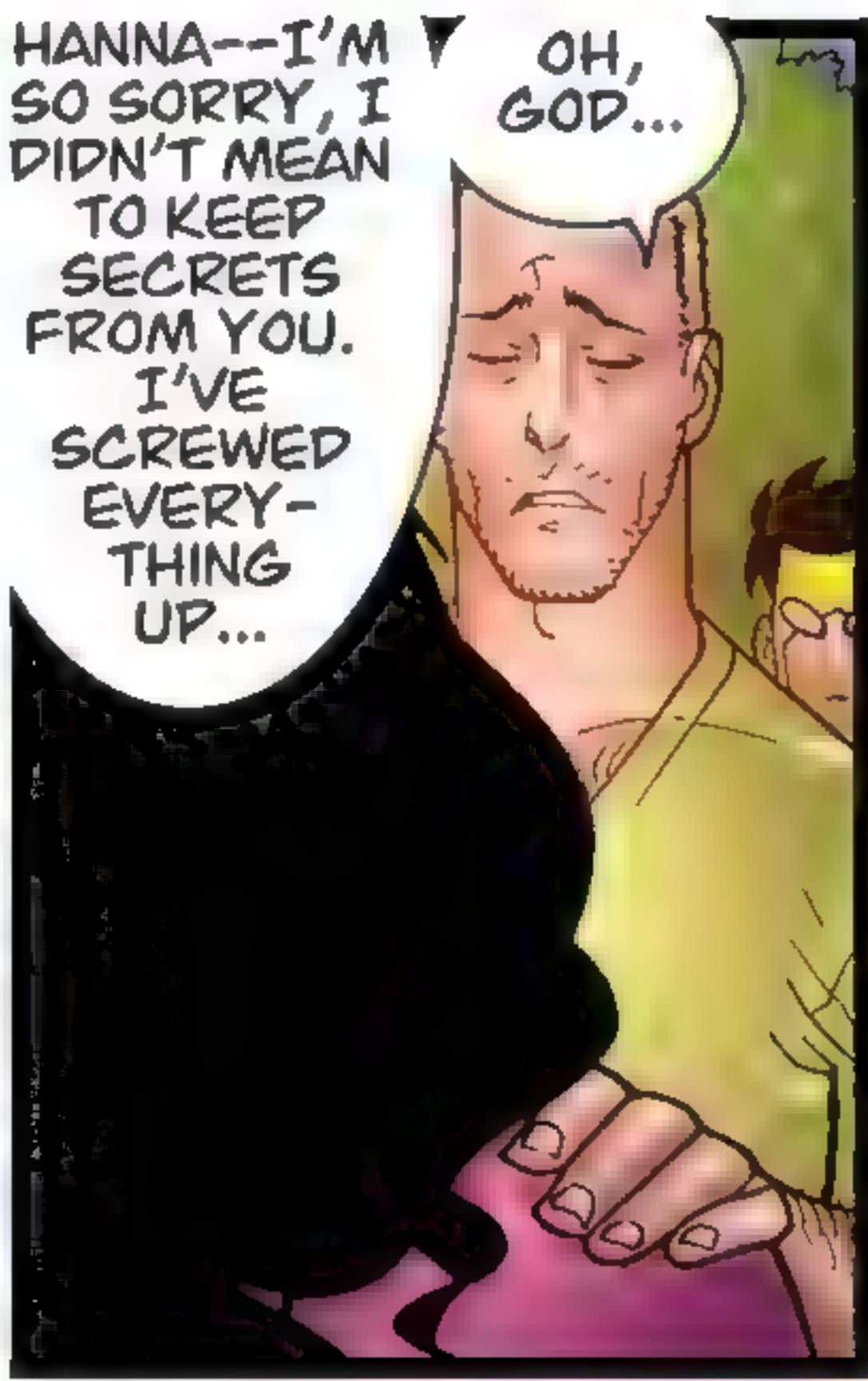
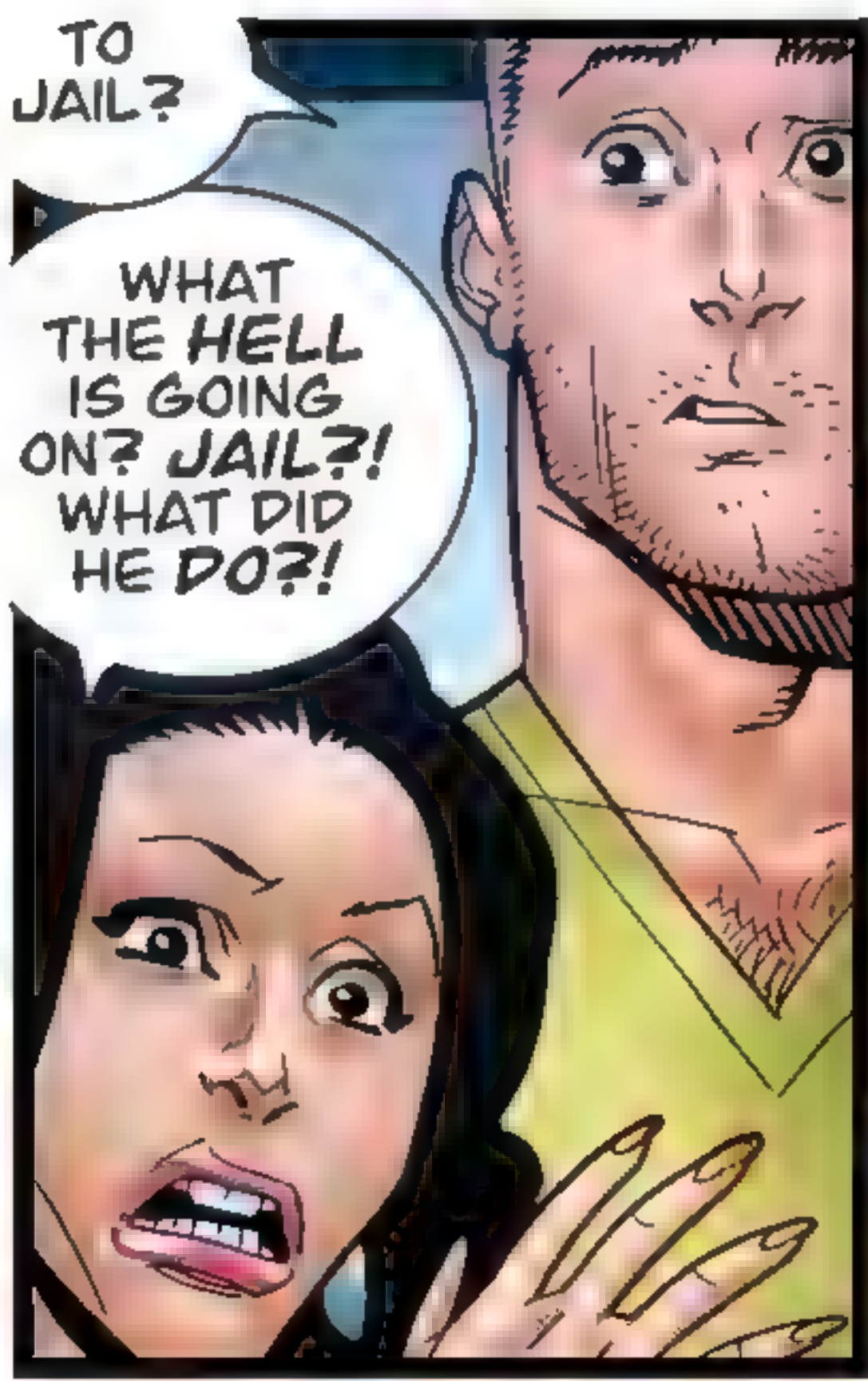
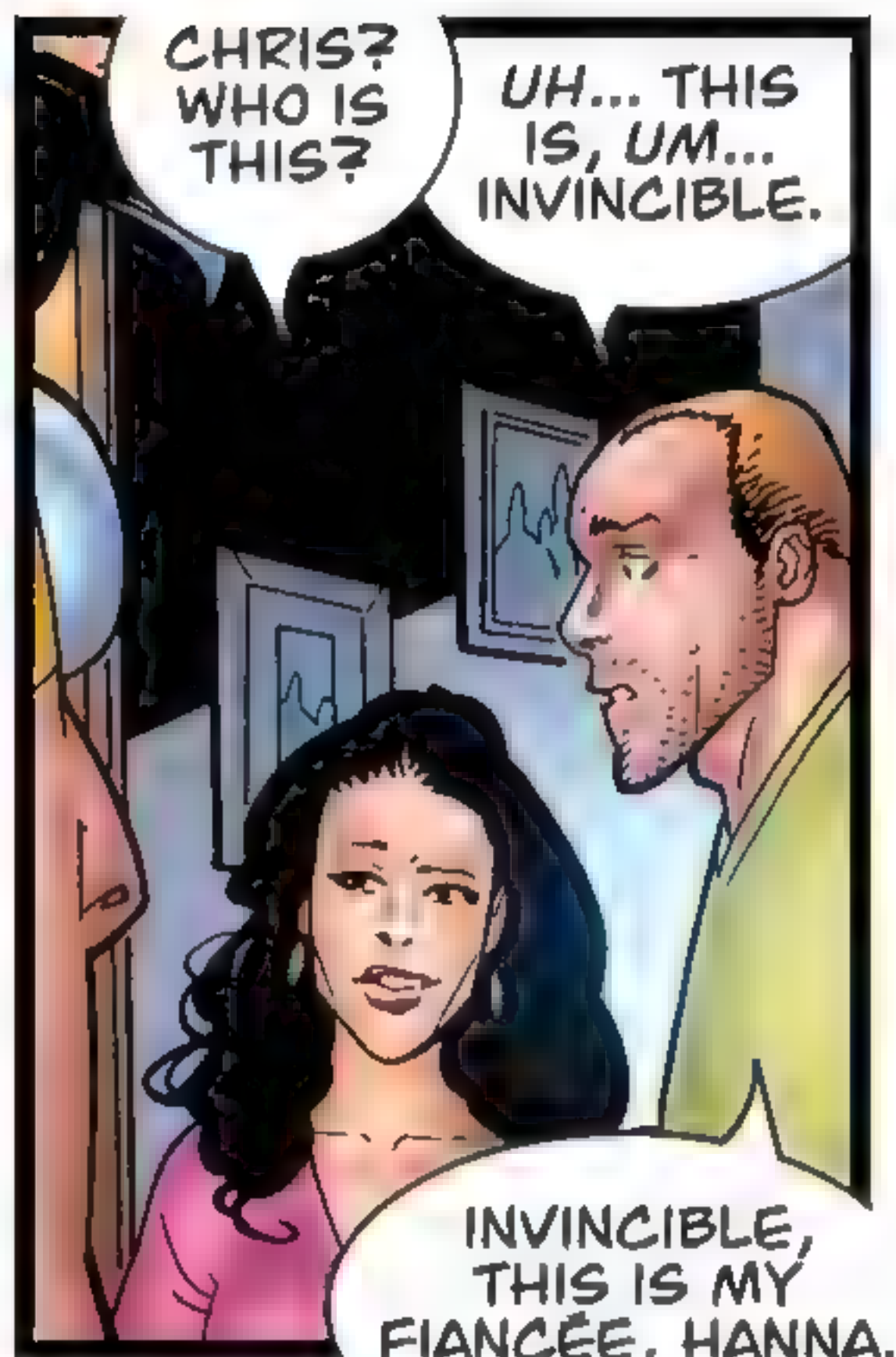
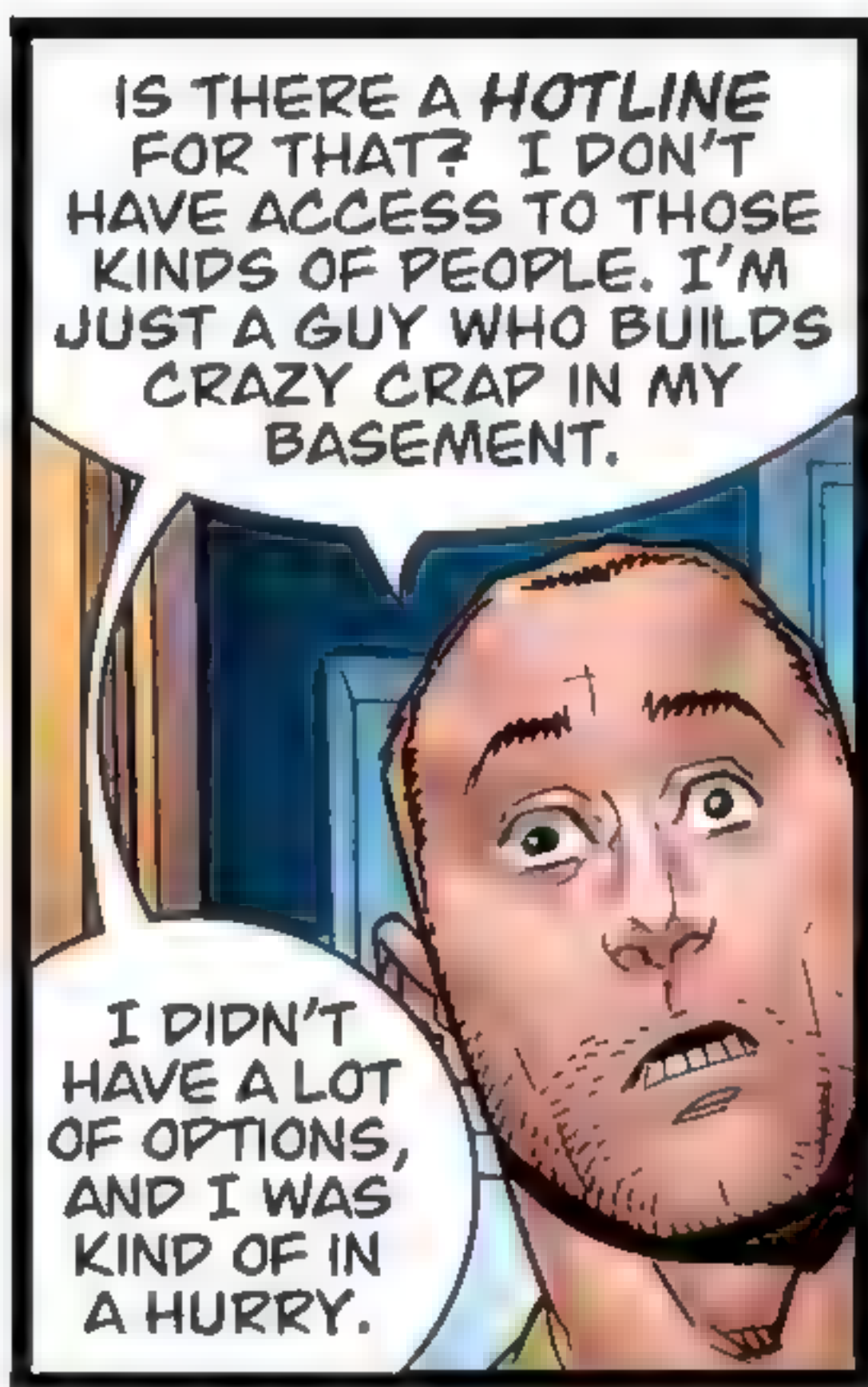
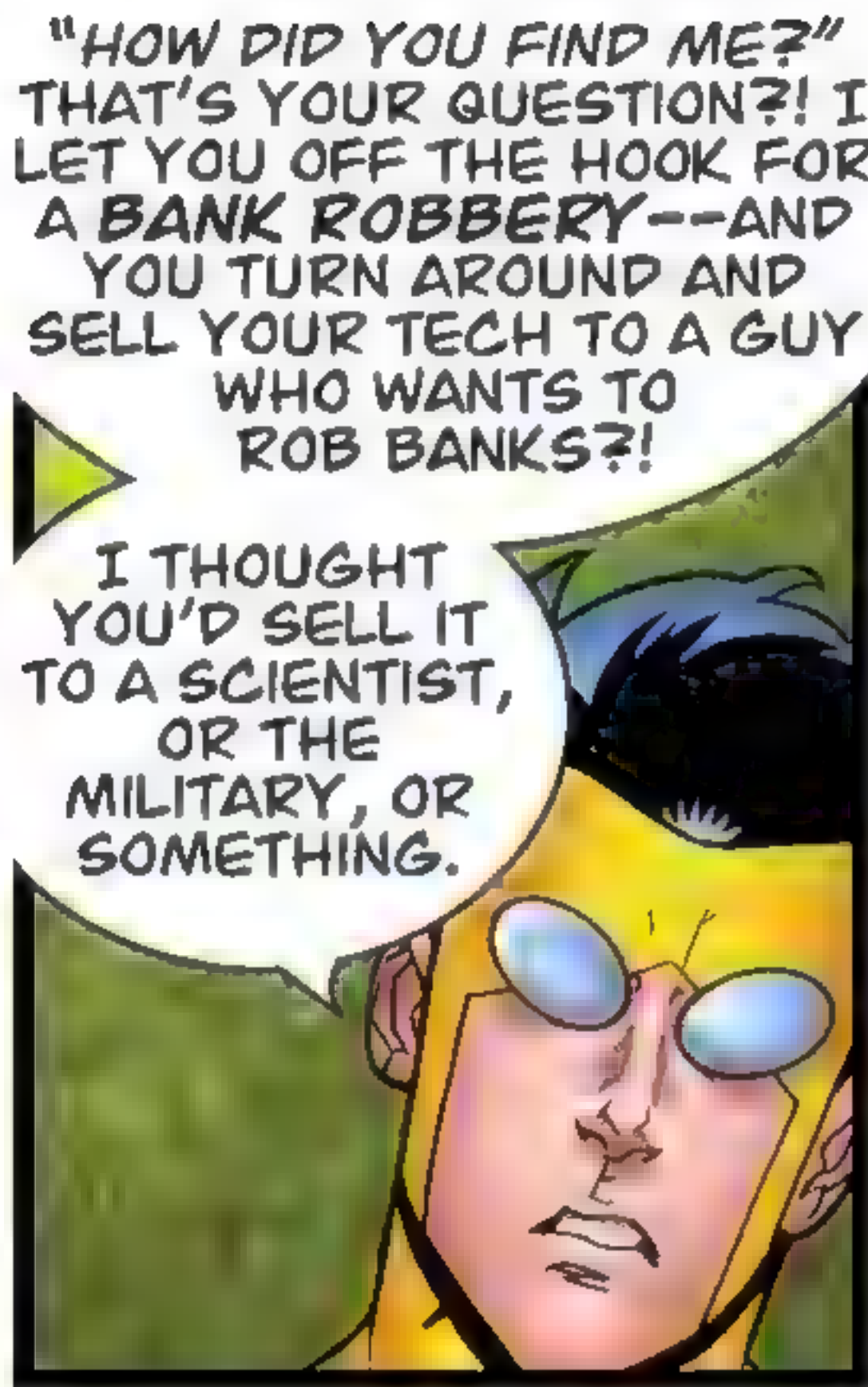


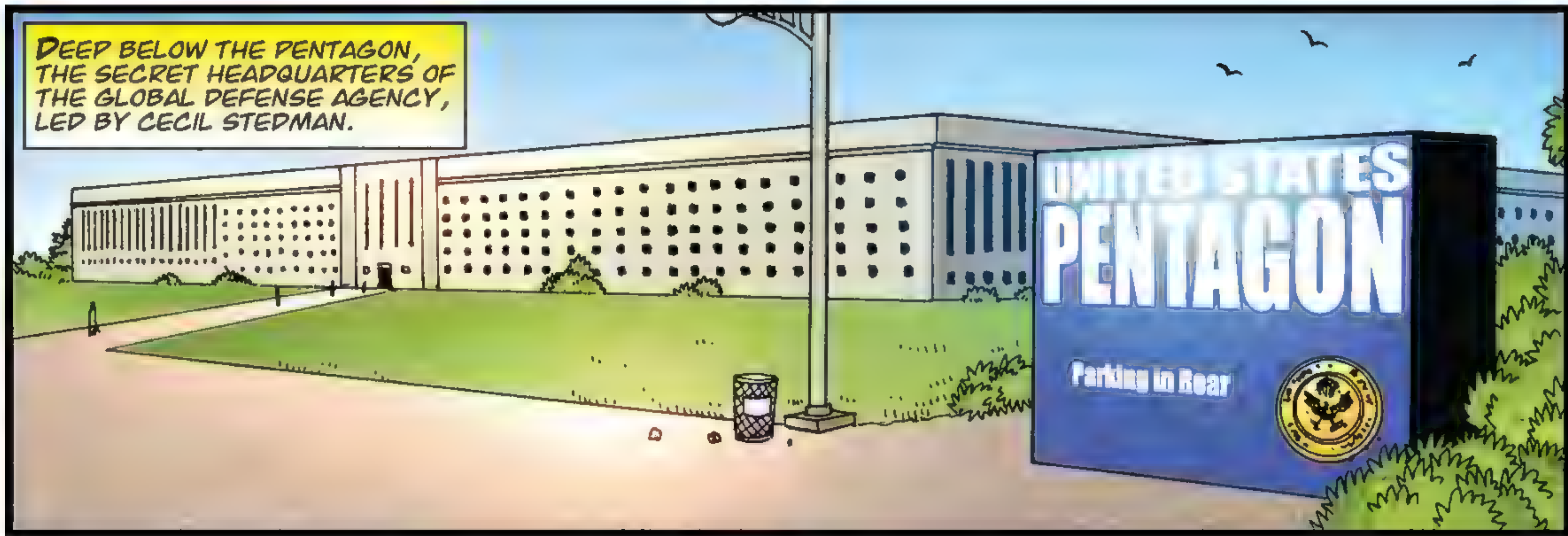




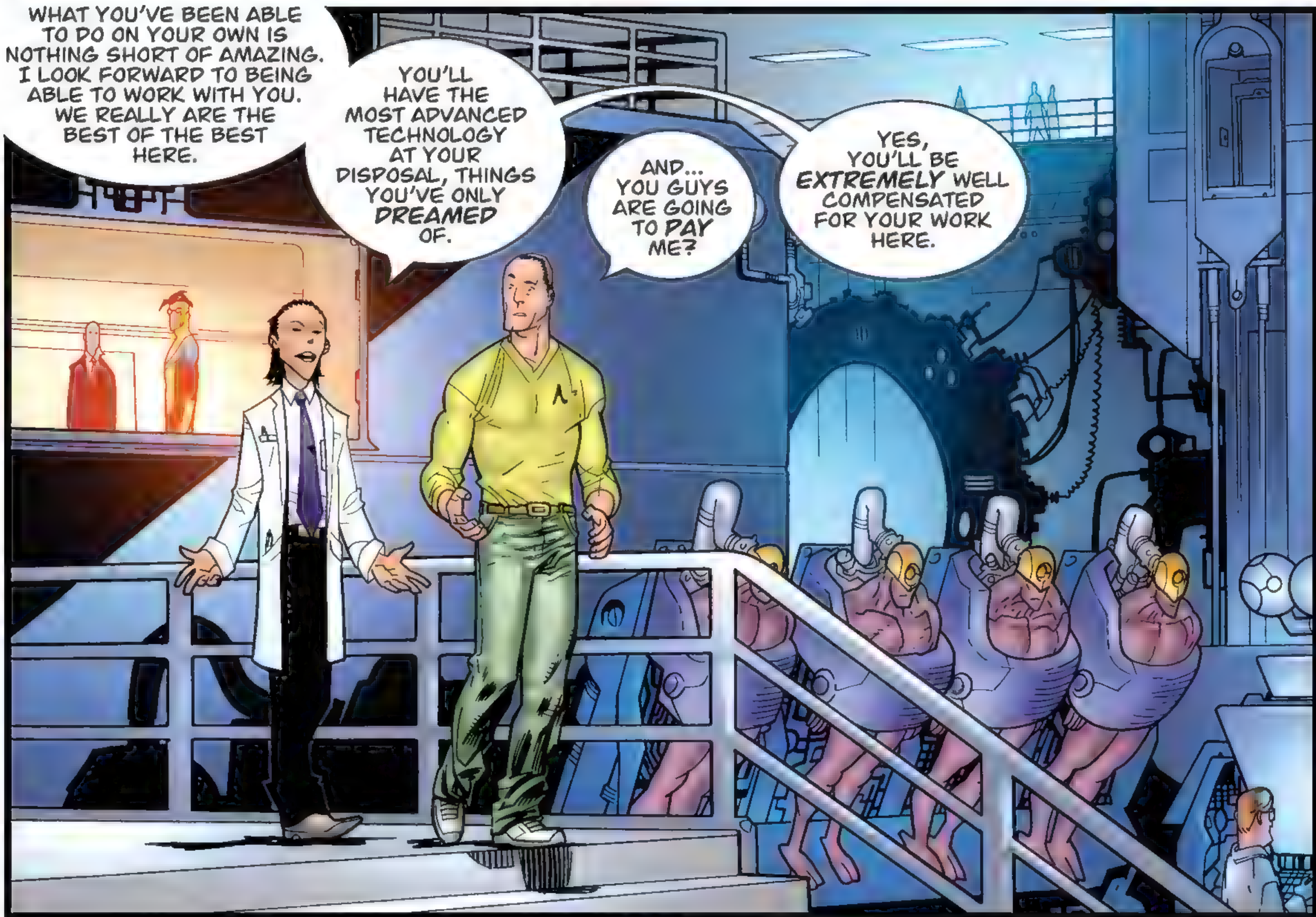








DEEP BELOW THE PENTAGON, THE SECRET HEADQUARTERS OF THE GLOBAL DEFENSE AGENCY, LED BY CECIL STEDMAN.



WHAT YOU'VE BEEN ABLE TO DO ON YOUR OWN IS NOTHING SHORT OF AMAZING. I LOOK FORWARD TO BEING ABLE TO WORK WITH YOU. WE REALLY ARE THE BEST OF THE BEST HERE.

YOU'LL HAVE THE MOST ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY AT YOUR DISPOSAL, THINGS YOU'VE ONLY DREAMED OF.

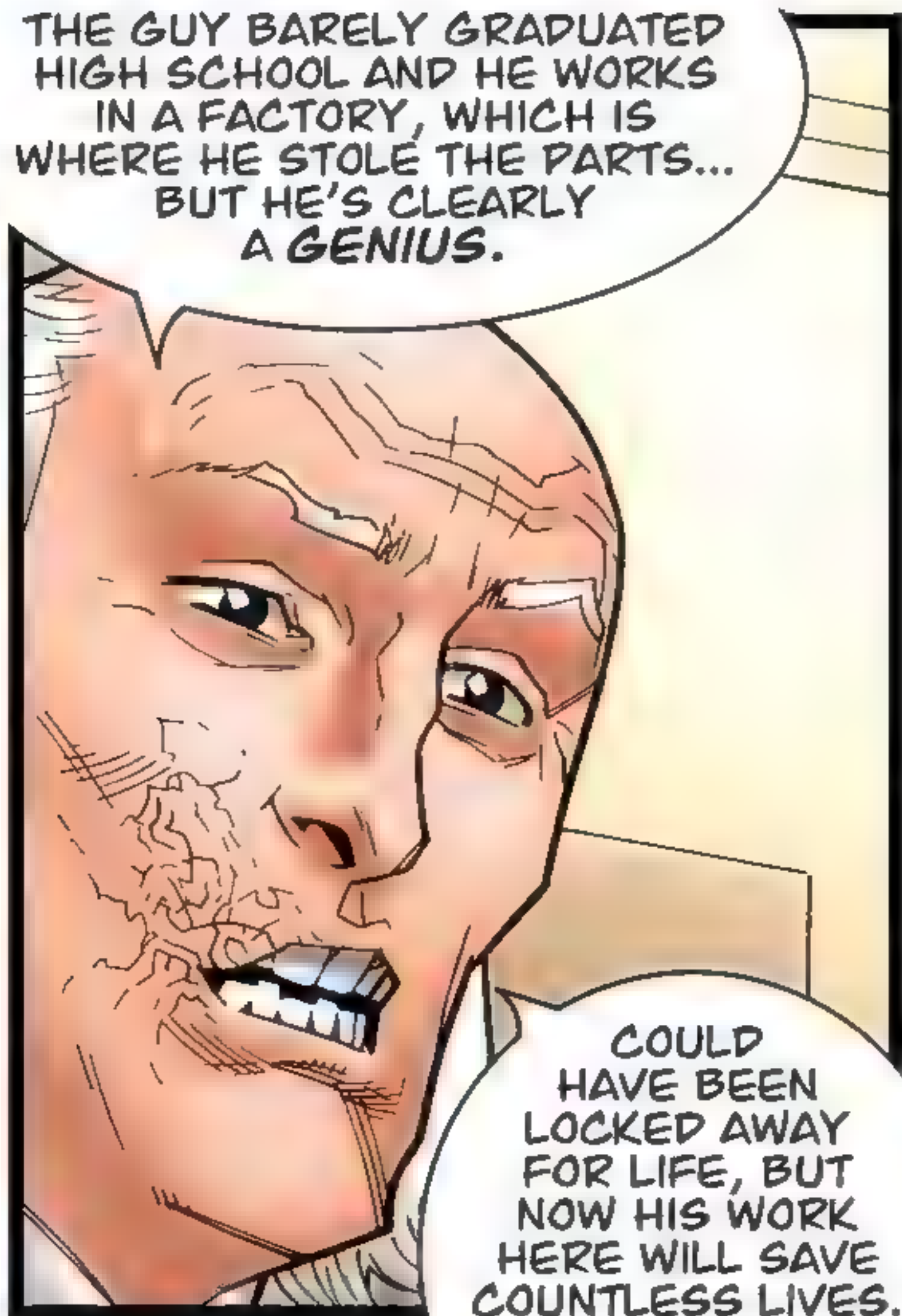
AND... YOU GUYS ARE GOING TO PAY ME?

YES, YOU'LL BE EXTREMELY WELL COMPENSATED FOR YOUR WORK HERE.



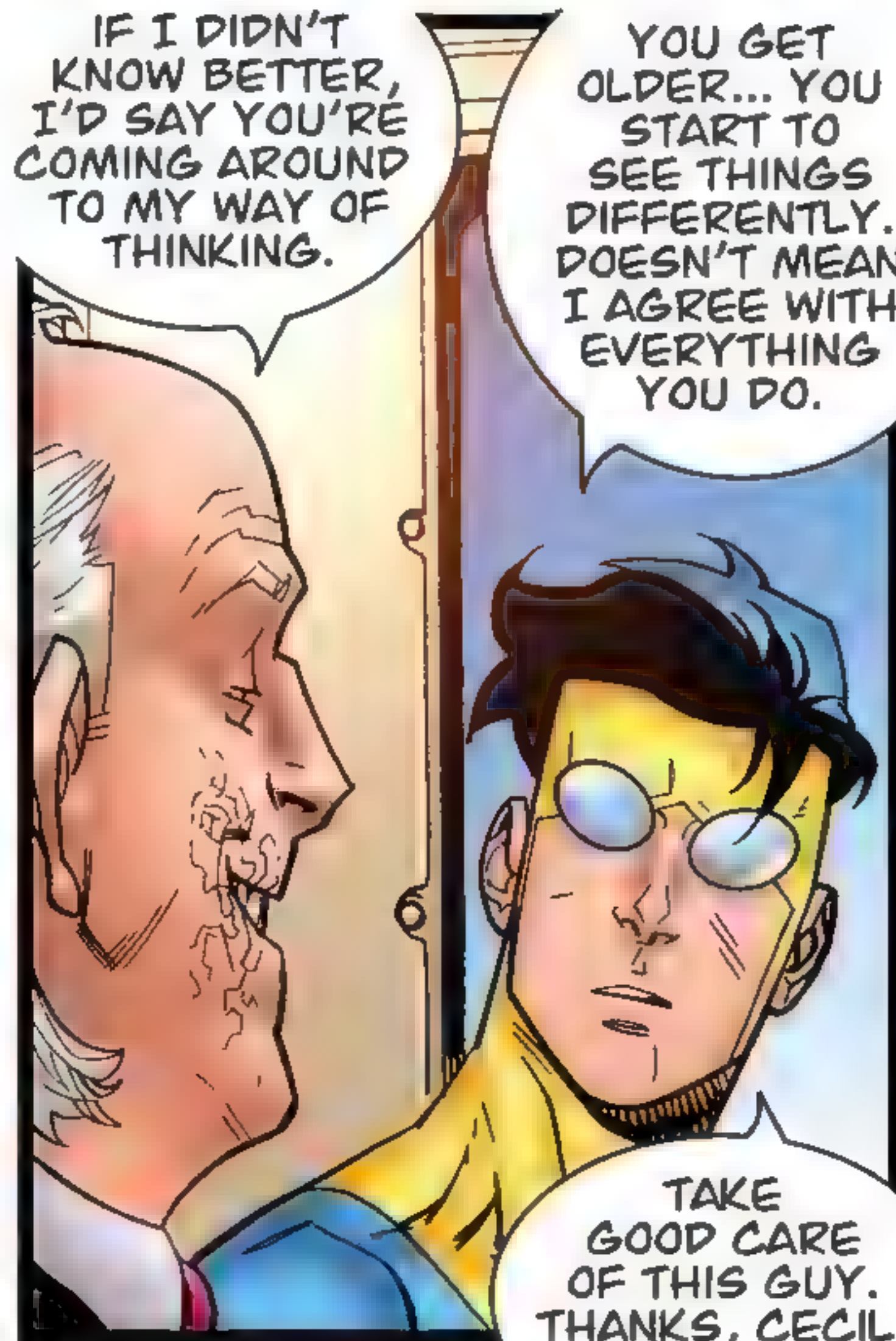
THIS IS JUST... UNHEARD OF, REALLY. HE JUST... INVENTED THIS STUFF SO HE COULD GET AN ENGAGEMENT RING?

YEAH, AND YOU SAY HE HAS NO TECHNICAL EDUCATION?



THE GUY BARELY GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL AND HE WORKS IN A FACTORY, WHICH IS WHERE HE STOLE THE PARTS... BUT HE'S CLEARLY A GENIUS.

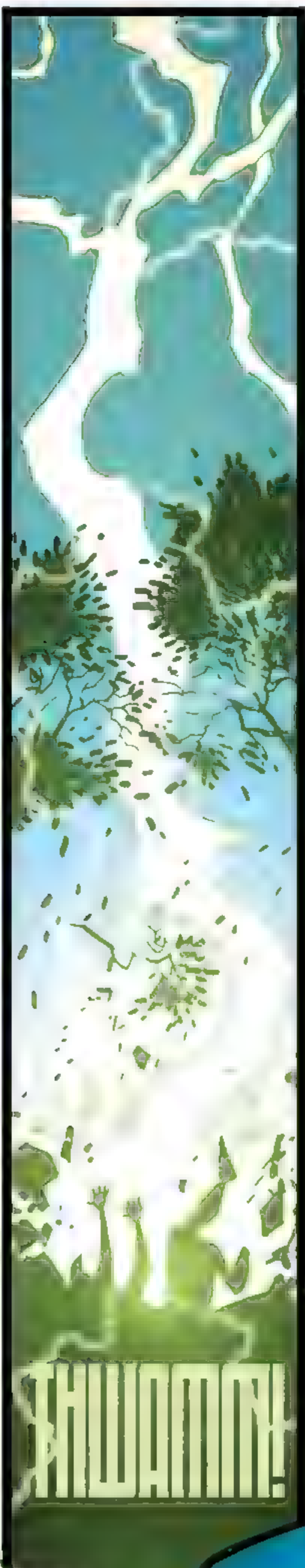
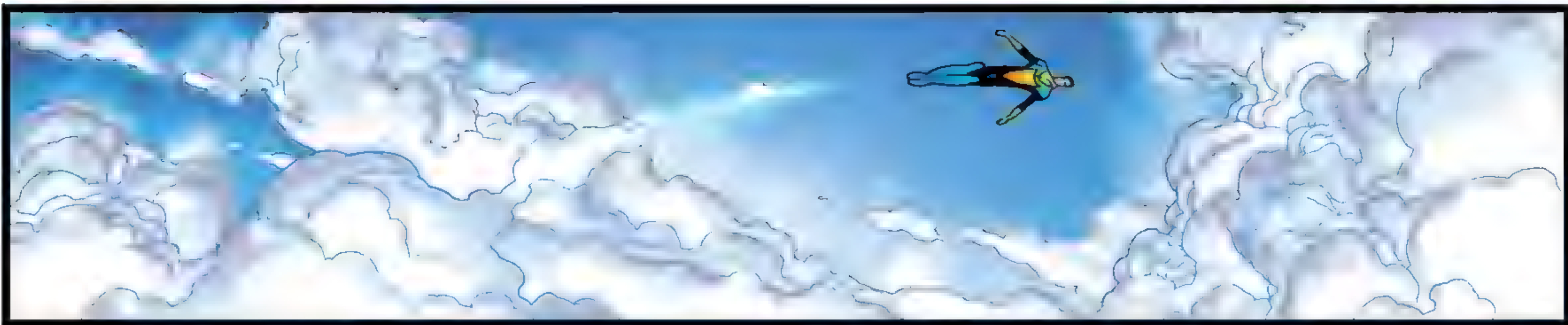
COULD HAVE BEEN LOCKED AWAY FOR LIFE, BUT NOW HIS WORK HERE WILL SAVE COUNTLESS LIVES.



IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER, I'D SAY YOU'RE COMING AROUND TO MY WAY OF THINKING.

YOU GET OLDER... YOU START TO SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY. DOESN'T MEAN I AGREE WITH EVERYTHING YOU DO.

TAKE GOOD CARE OF THIS GUY. THANKS, CECIL.





WHY COULDN'T YOU HAVE STAYED IN SPACE?! THINGS WERE SO MUCH BETTER WITHOUT YOU HERE!

I WAS GETTING MY LIFE IN ORDER... DEALING WITH BECKY AND JACK'S DEATH... I WAS COPING--DOING SOME GOOD EVEN.

I WAS RELEASED, I JOINED THE ACTIONEERS!



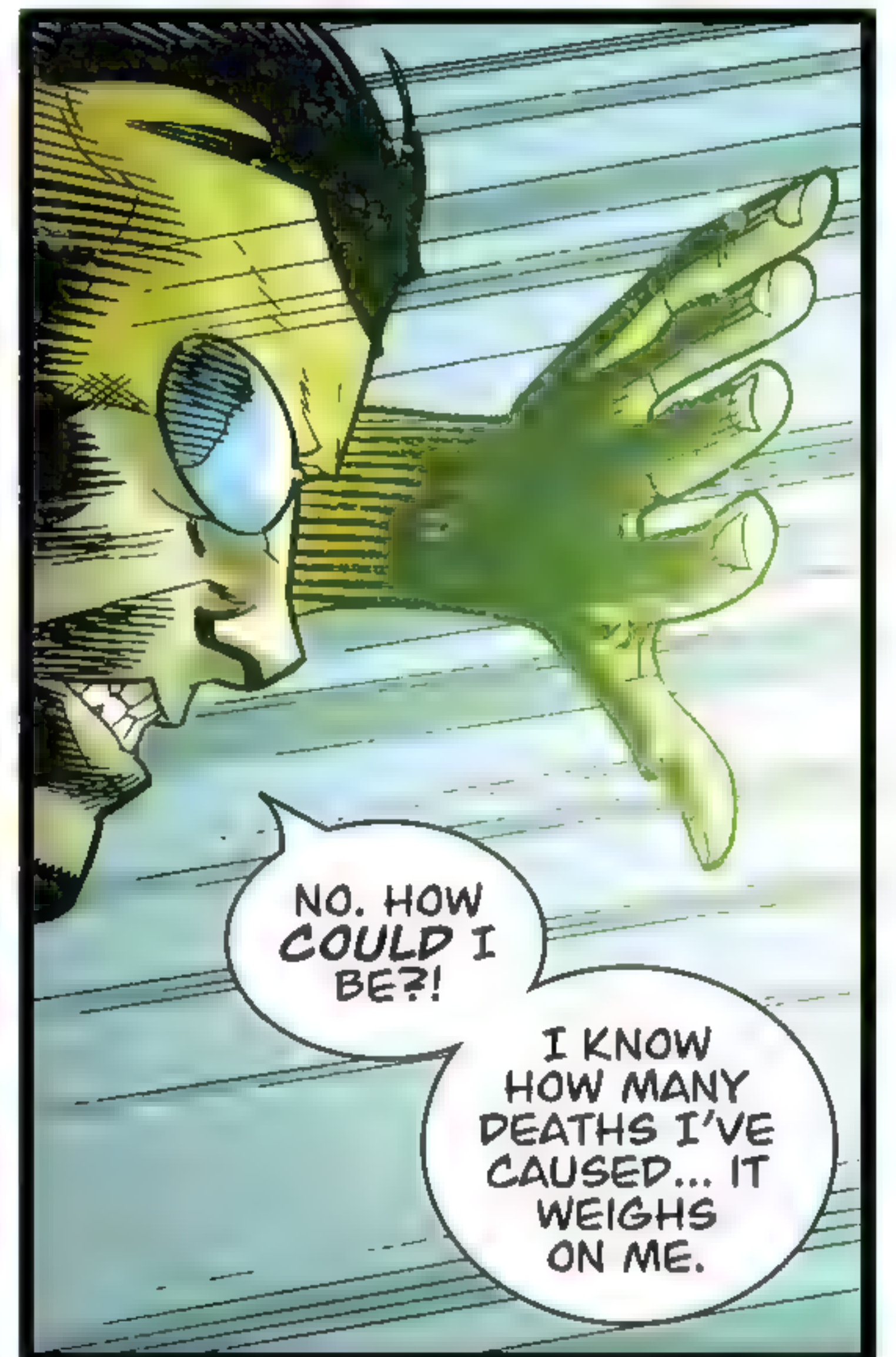
THANKS FOR THE UPDATE?

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO SAY?



LAS VEGAS!

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE TO DIE BEFORE YOU SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE?! ARE YOU REALLY OBLIVIOUS TO THE DESTRUCTION YOU CAUSE?



NO. HOW COULD I BE?!

I KNOW HOW MANY DEATHS I'VE CAUSED... IT WEIGHS ON ME.

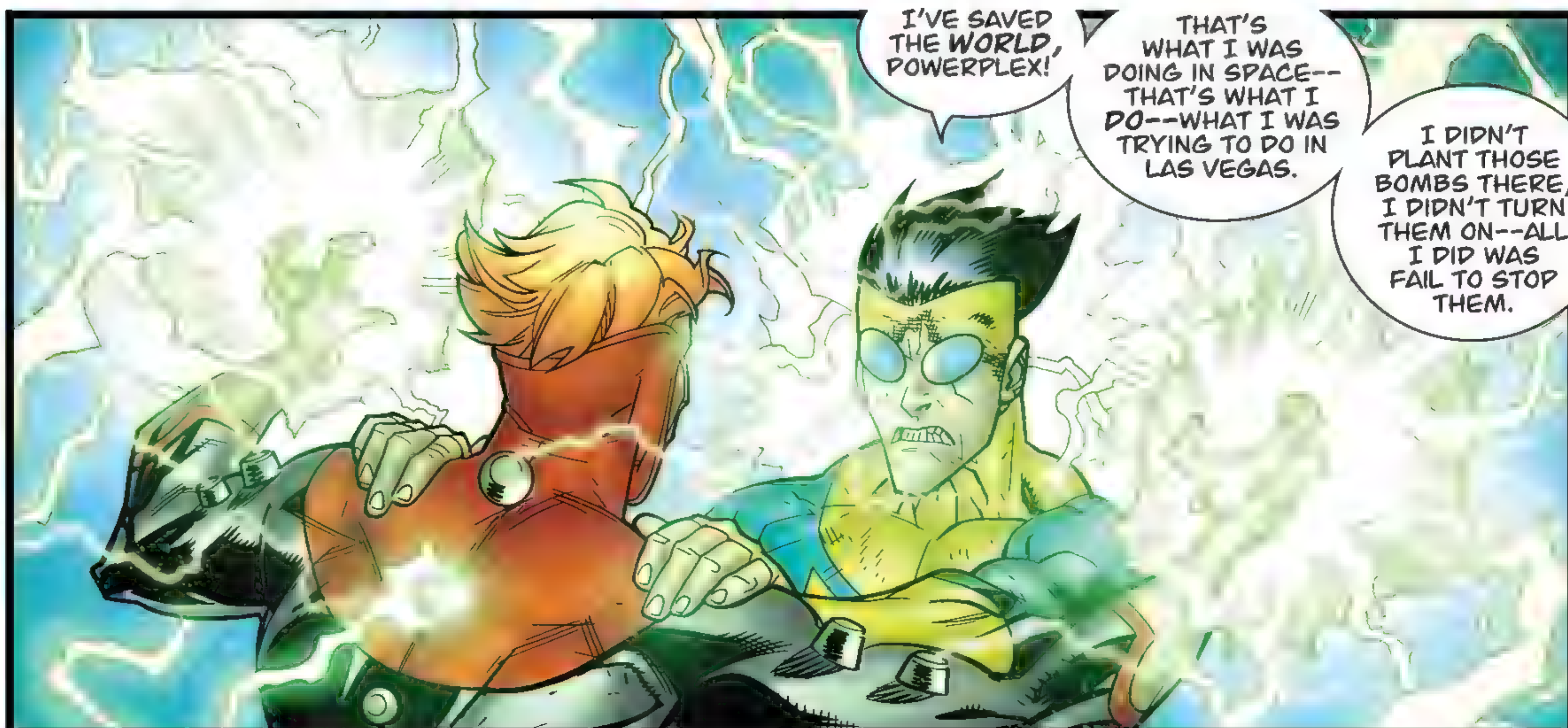


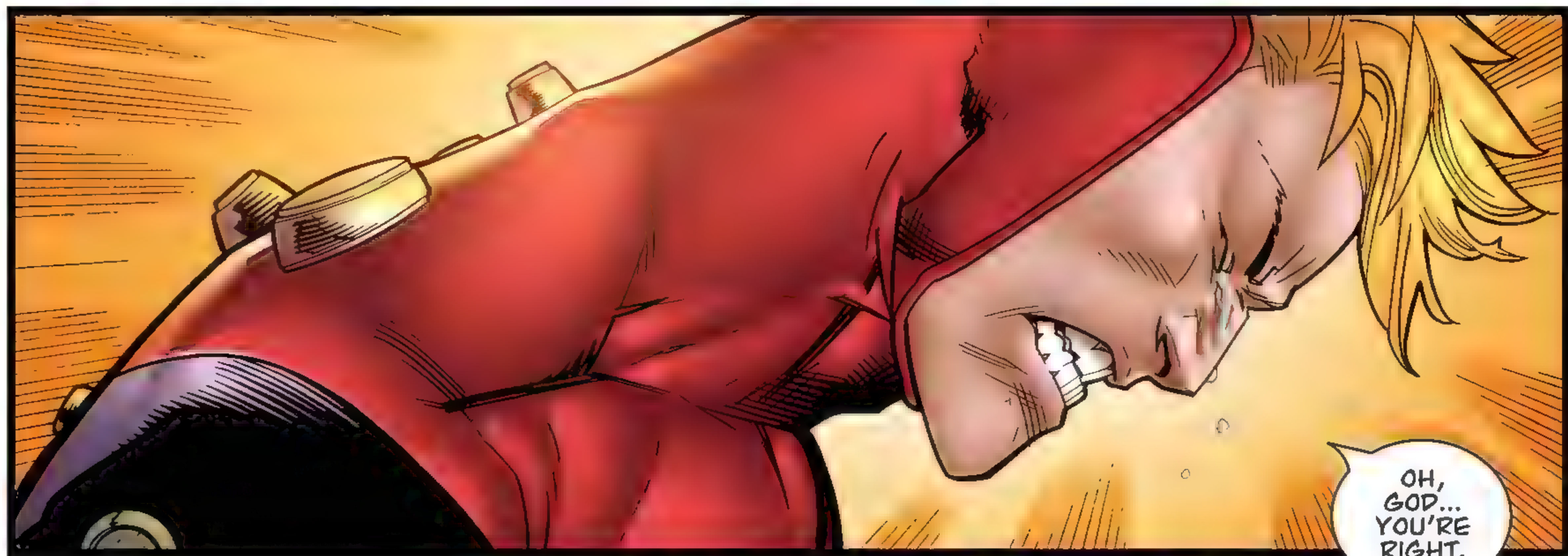
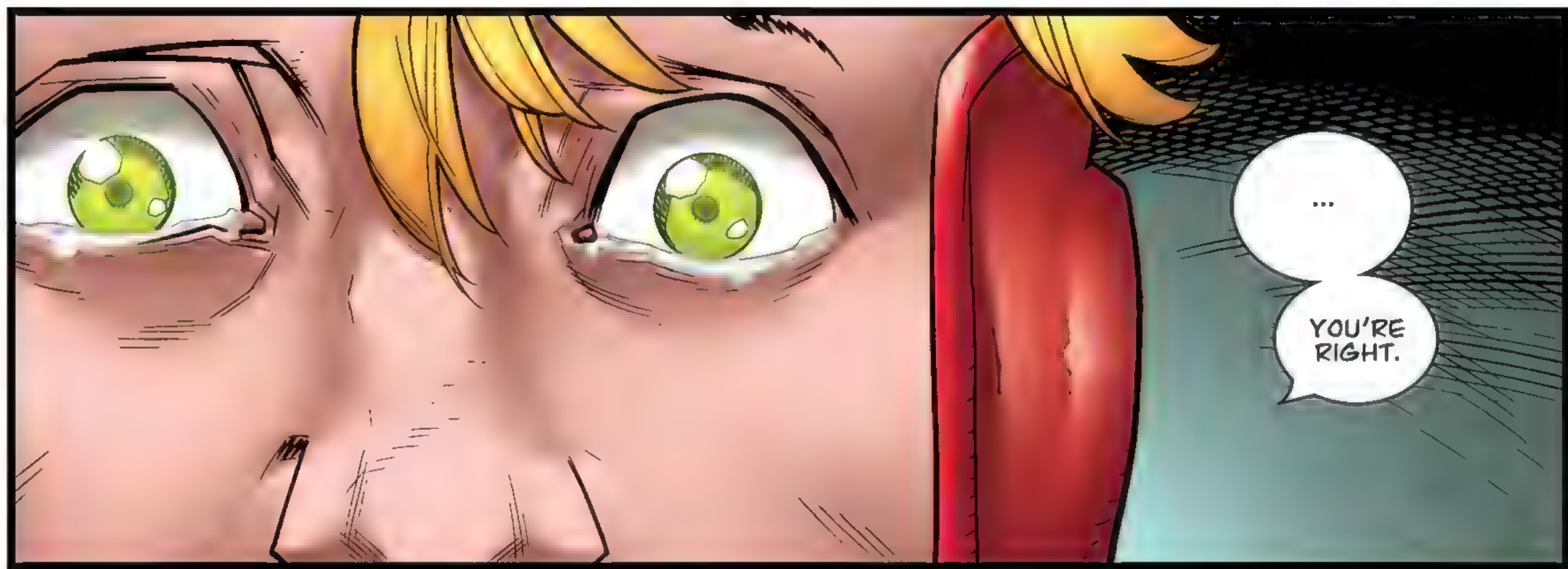
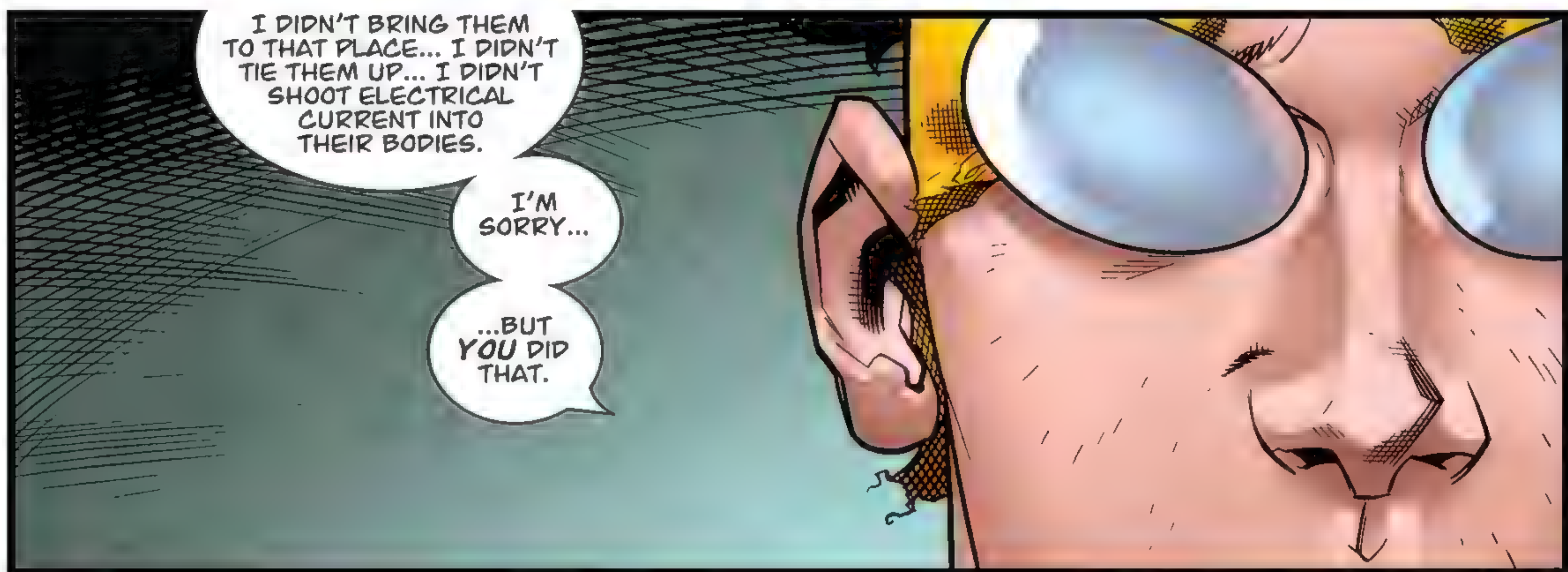
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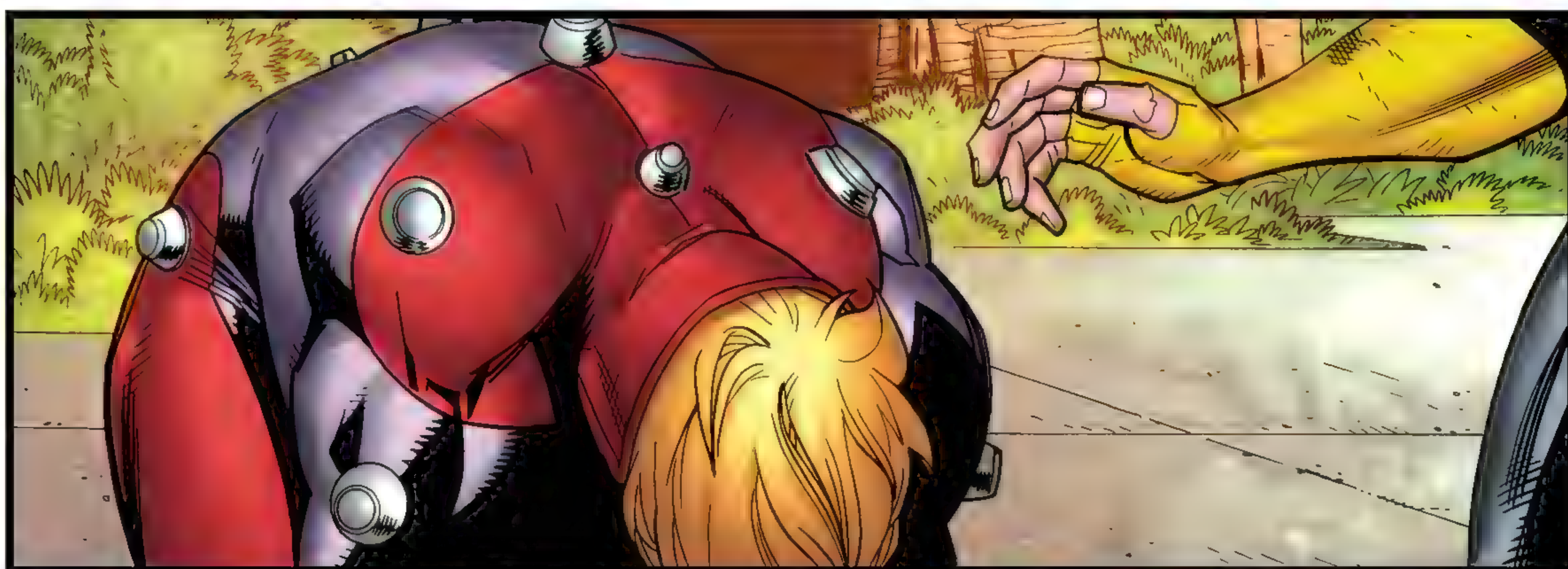
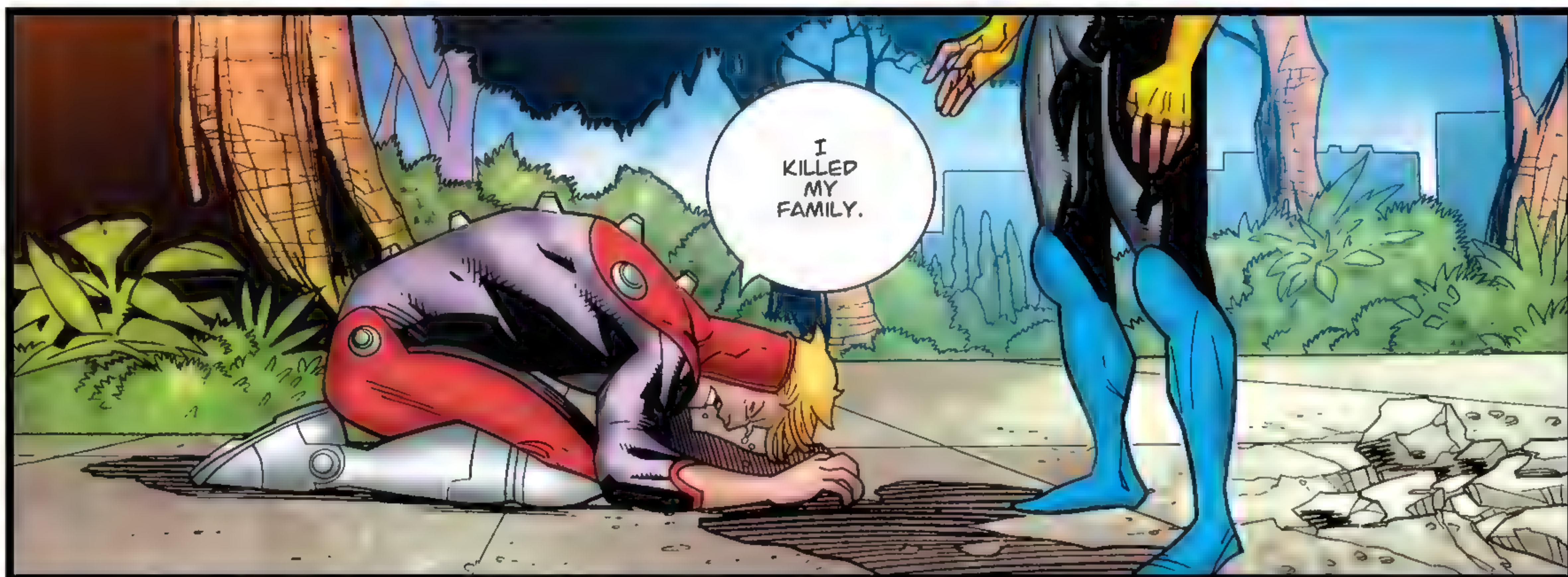


DO YOU THINK I'M STUPID? OR CRAZY? I'M NOT EVIL.

NOT A DAY GOES BY THAT I DON'T THINK ABOUT IT.

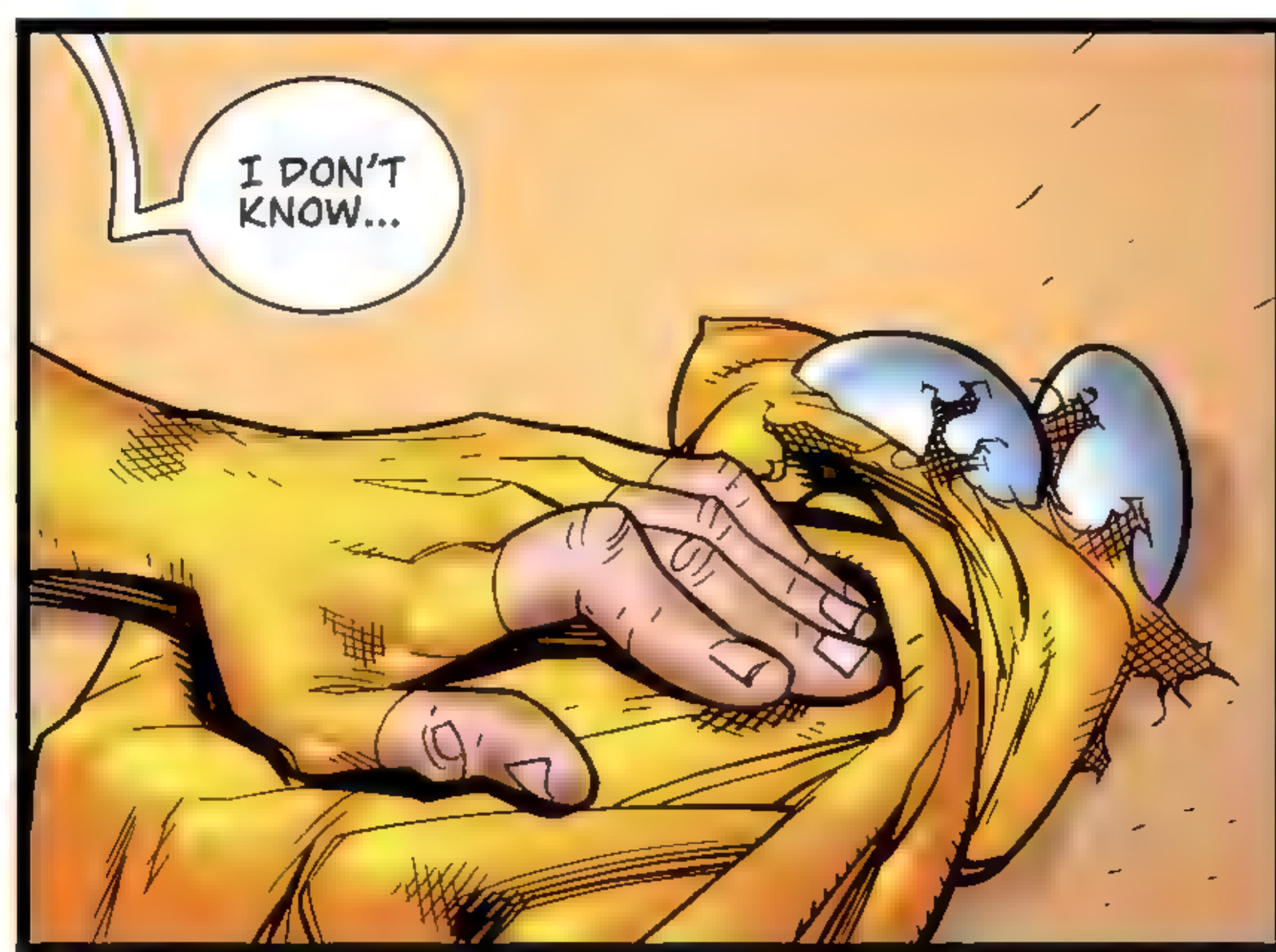
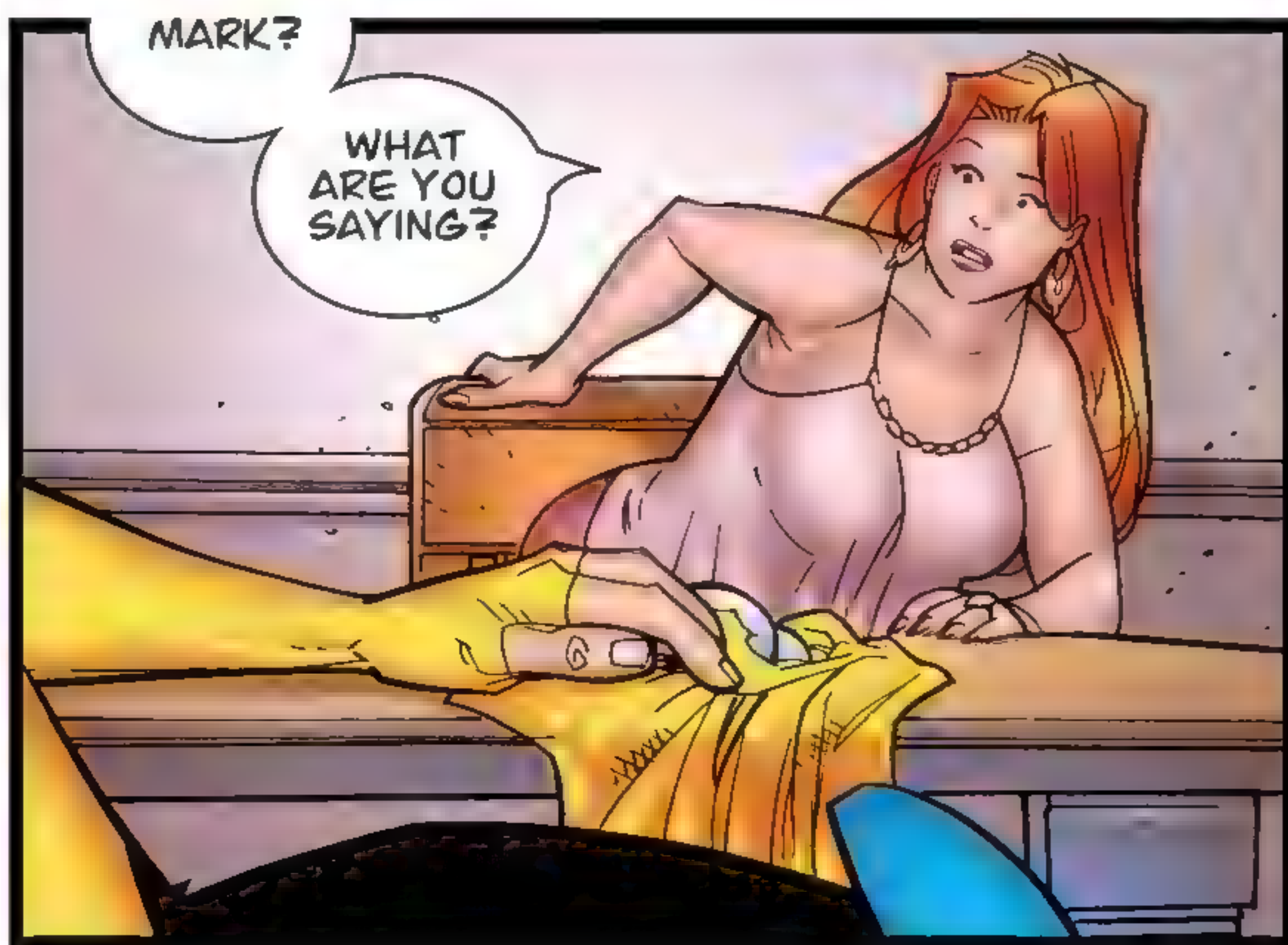
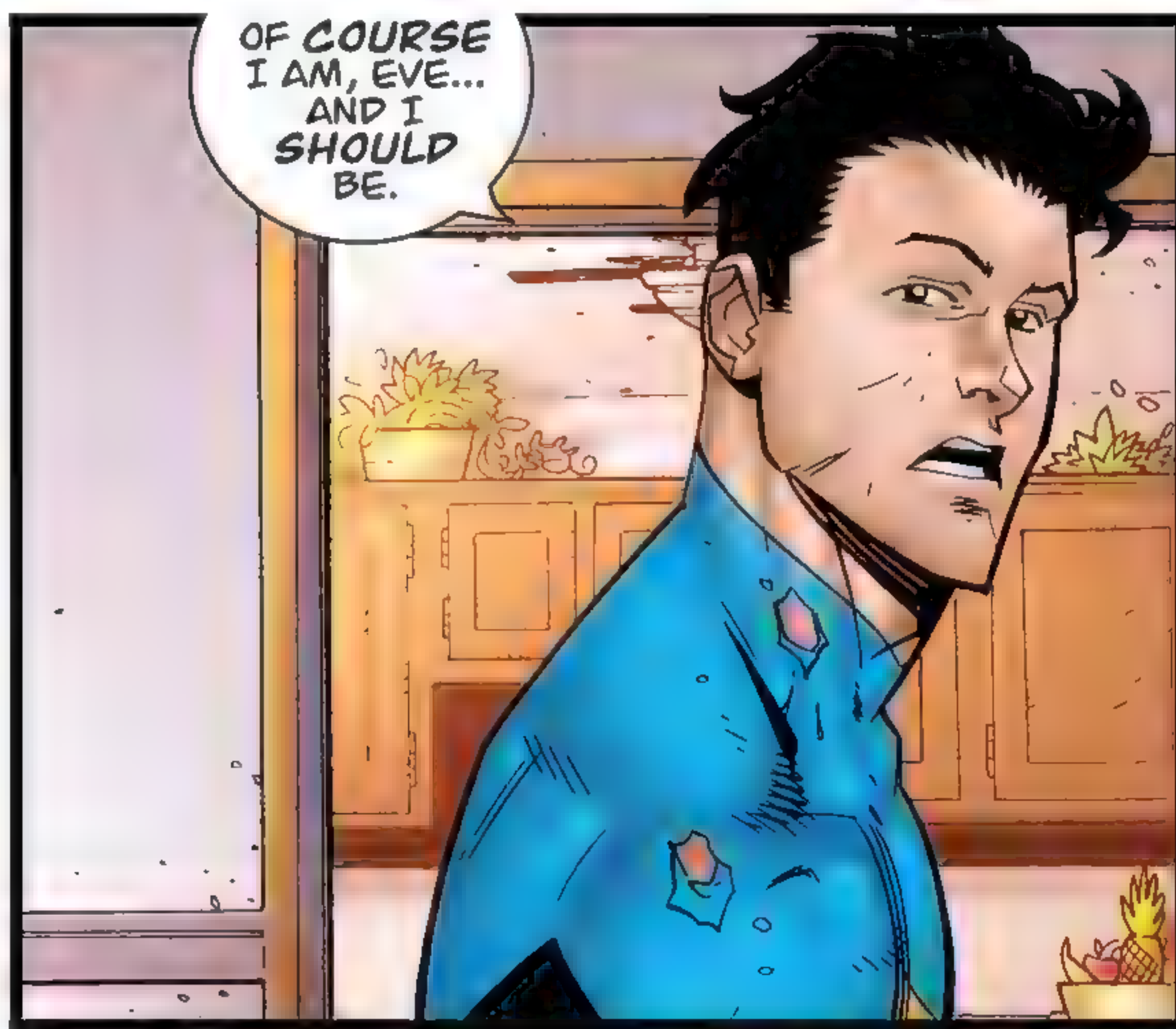
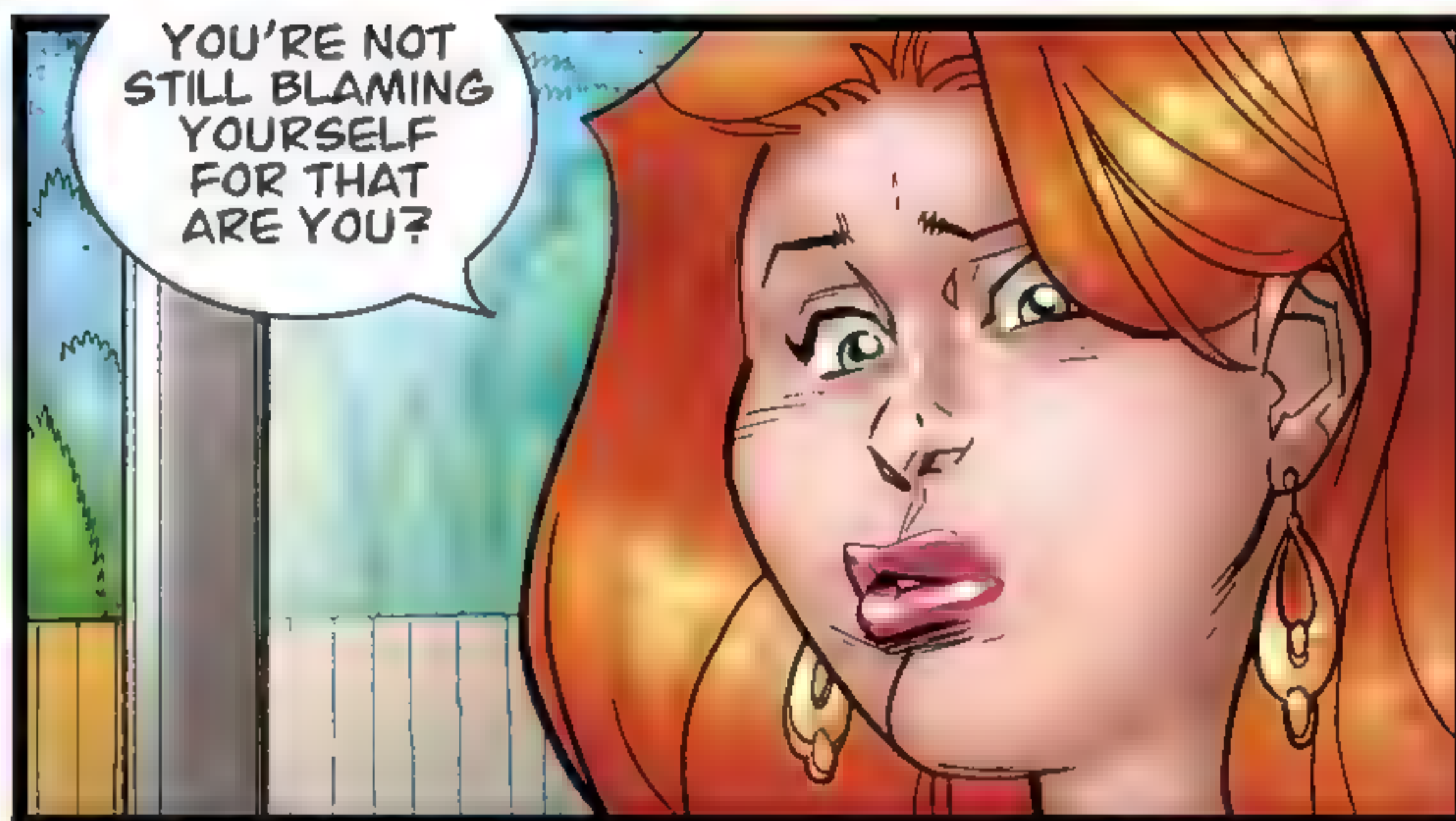


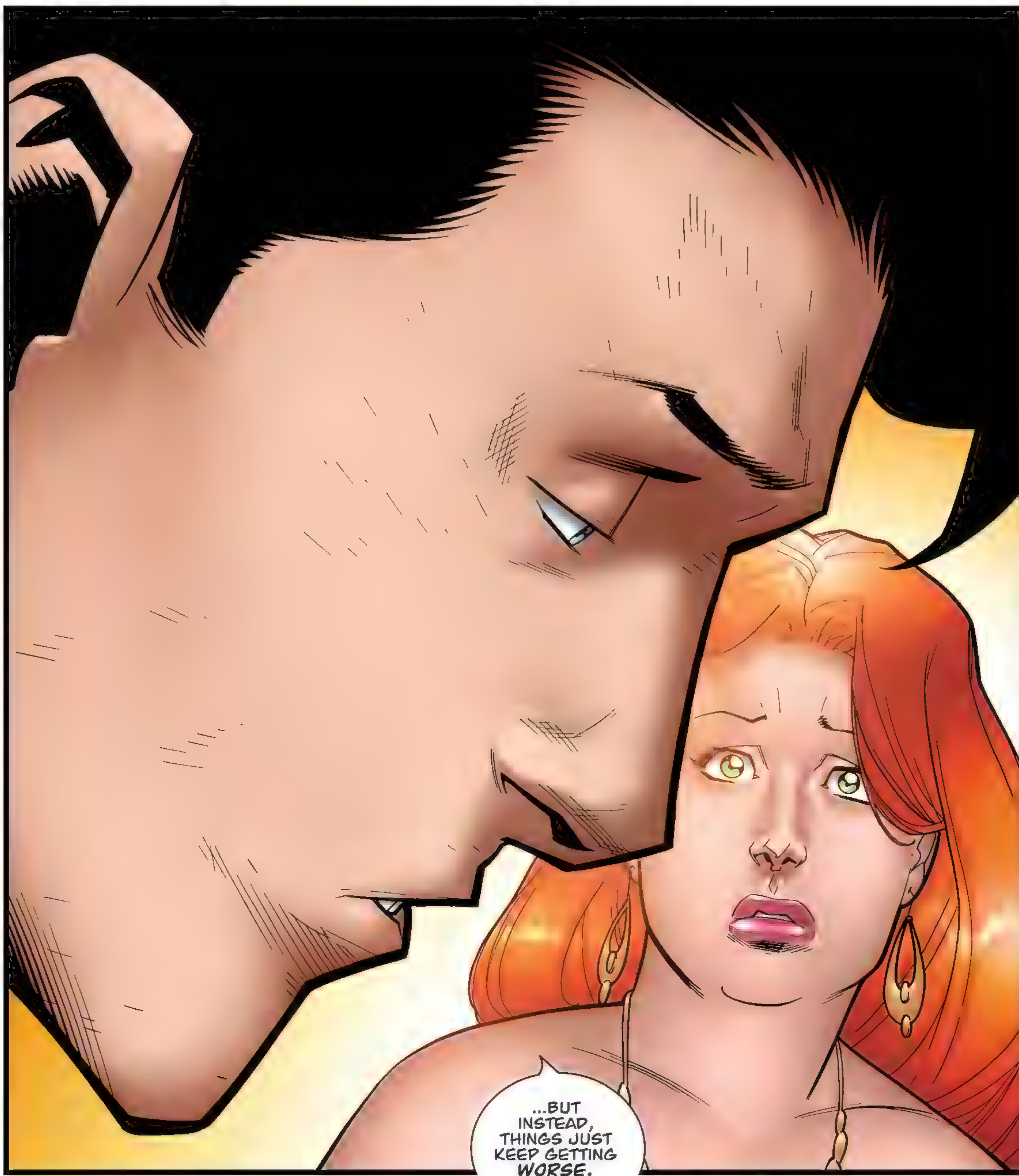
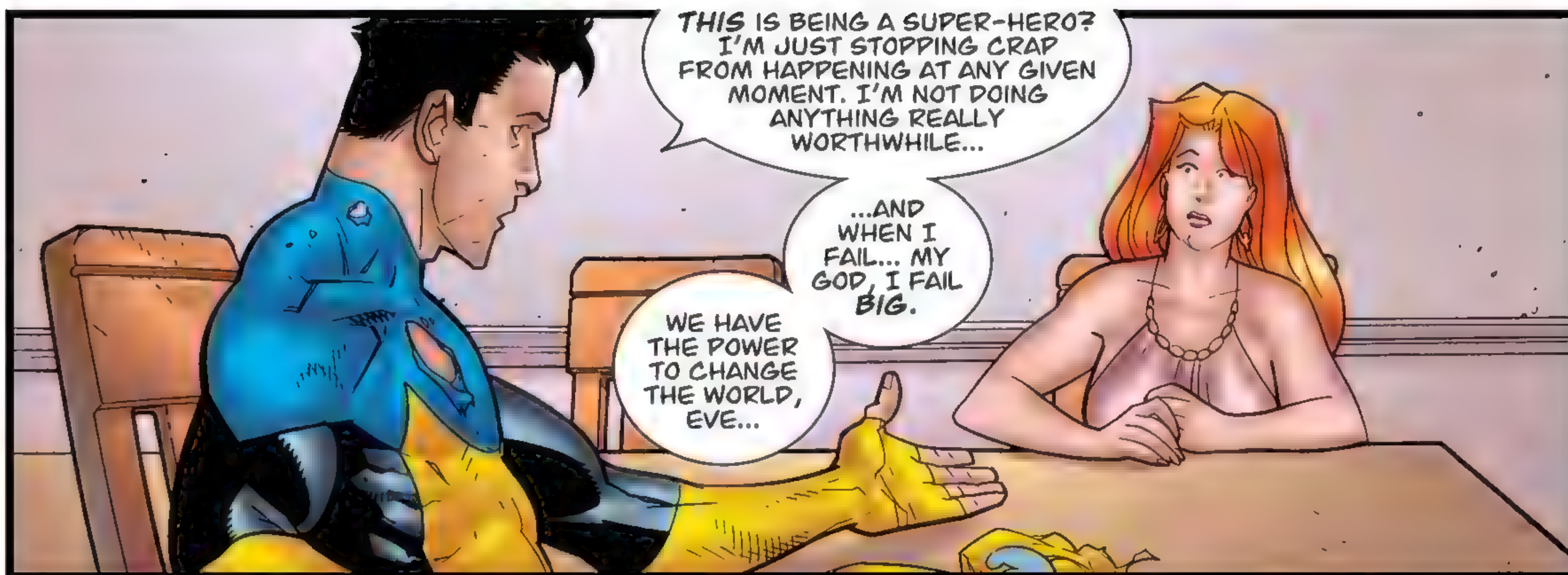












WRITE US @

INVINCIBLE@FUNKOTRON.COM



Hey, Invincipals!

Editor Sina Grace here. There’s a lot of back and forth about the events that took place on Earth while Mark was off fighting the Viltrumite War (I.E. Eve’s abortion), so I’m going to not make any stupid remarks (lie) and let you all have the stage.

I’ve got things to do, too (This is Robert) so yeah, let’s just dive in!

To the One called Robert Kirkman I address this letter (Sina, you can read this letter as well),

Thanks.

First, let me say this is my first time ever writing to a letters column (how cliché of a start is that?) but yes, you guys are my first time. That being said I have been impressed with Invincible for quite some time, but #79 reminded me of my biggest qualm with the title, and I felt it was time to let my nerd voice be heard (actually... just read).

For reasons that are quite unfathomable, I greatly enjoy the couple of The Immortal and Dupli-Kate, with the Immortal being my favorite of the heroes in the book. Like I said, rather unfathomable for how big of a jerk he tends to be... and then there’s that whole future despot thing, but now I’m getting off topic.

The reason I’m writing is the distinct lack of The Immortal and Dupli-Kate since they retired (yeah there was that one panel in Invincible’s Viltrumite War-induced nightmare, but that’s not enough). So my question becomes: Will we get to see them back in action again or will they be doomed to be the couple that Eve and Mark chill with? It’s beyond me to question a deity like Robert, but I want more of them be it just as back ups in the main title, or perhaps a mini chronicling The Immortal through the centuries? *crosses fingers*

Your request has been noted.

I’ve always wanted to do a mini-series featuring The Immortal during his time as Abraham Lincoln doing the Civil War--but there’s only so much time in a day and it would require a lot of research. I was serious enough to buy a couple books on Lincoln, but not serious enough to start reading them.

Maybe someday, though.

But what the heck, it’s cool that they’re the couple Mark and Eve chill with! Right?!

I want to make some sort of ultimatum here (well, not really because Loeb ruined that word for me) but you have my \$2.99 each month guaranteed, so please just consider more of these two. Beyond that all I have to say is thank you for the amazing book.

Sincerley yours, the only Immortal fan in existence,

Collin Avery
dictacted, not read

It would have been nice if you had some kind of opinion on Eve’s abortion... now my intro is ruined!

Dear Robert.

I’ve been reading Invincible (and Walking Dead and most everything else with the Kirkman brand on it) pretty much since issue 1. I’ve always been impressed with your ability to find fantastic artists to bring out the best from your words. Which brings me to my point... why the hell have you been hiding Ms Grace’s fantastic art from us and keeping her as just a letter page monkey??? I have just finished the first three issues of Li’l depressed boy and am as blown away by these three works of art as I was by Phonogram. I can only assume that it is your deep seated male chauvinist attitudes that have caused your abject failure to handcuff this great artist to an easel for an Invincible universe series, or at the very least have failed to give the LDB the benefit which you gave to such male-drawn titles as Chew and Turf. SEXIST!!!!

Blush!

What do you mean Ms. Grace is a bloke???

Is this some kind of Crying Game/ Ace Ventura thing? Oh god But L..!? Twice!?! I feel sick. Well then the fact that you sacked the lovely Ms. Sitterson for this fella just proves my point!

Aubrey Sitterson: *Blush!*

I leave you chastised
Geoff Davies
Manchester
England
OK to print if you have that Marvel rule

This is how things work now at Skybound: all gender bending, all the time. Or at least that’s what it feels like in the editorial department...

Can I just state for the record that both Aubrey and Sina are dudes. Not ladies. I would never hire a woman at Skybound. (GAIL SIMONE, CALM DOWN, I’M JOKING! [and I know you won’t read this. [so why am I bothering with this joke??]])

When discussing it with friends, I suggested that Eve might’ve had an abortion, and seriously everyone I’ve talked to about it dismissed that possibility. Honestly, I don’t blame them. It’s not something I’ve ever seen dealt with in a comic book, especially not a super hero comic.

If this letter sees print, I’m sure it will run alongside some irate “I’m dropping this book you baby killer!” ex-fan mail. That’s a shame. I really don’t think this book aspires to make political statements. I think it’s a book populated by complex characters, involved in complex relationships, who make complex decisions. Eve was obviously crushed when she found out she was pregnant. She was not ready to be a mother, especially with Mark off in space. Agree with it or not, people do have abortions. A lot of people. She chose to terminate the pregnancy, and it’s quite obvious she did not take that decision lightly.

My decision to put this letter after the ultimate fan mail decrying my gender, however, was taken lightly.

The way Kirkman, Ottley, and everyone involved depicted Eve, her decision, her emotions, and Mark’s reaction was incredibly real. Kirkman had a chance to back out, distance himself from Eve’s decision, pass judgment on the character, and invite the reader to do the same. He passed on that chance with Mark’s reaction to Eve. Mark was shocked, he was hurt, even guilt stricken. But in the end, he loves Eve and he supports her. He trusts her.

So, we’re not looking at a public service announcement. We’re reading a story about characters with depth. These people have lives. They have relationships. They fly around in space and punch aliens and stuff too, but we care about those things so much more--the stakes are so much higher--because the people are so real. Thanks for the best super hero comic in the universe, guys! Keep surprising us, and we’ll keep reading.

Keep it Kirkman,
Joseph Gray

Joseph, thanks for having faith in Robert’s approach to the story. It’s not one that he took with a grain of salt, nor is Invincible the home for discussing huge issues. A character had to make a real decision, and you called it.

P.S., Is “Keep it Kirkman” any good? It’s got alliteration like “Make mine Marvel,” but it doesn’t make as much sense, does it? “Make mine Mirkman” definitely doesn’t work though. Sorry.

I prefer “Kirk it up a notch.”

“Kirkman Kan Keep my money?” I don’t know. I’m tired.

Thanks for writing Joseph and yeah, this Eve story was set in motion a long time ago and this is such a hot-button issue that I was hesitant to do the story as I’d originally planned, but y’know, I figured I’d just stick to my guns. I love that Invincible is a book that can be so much fun and yet get completely serious at times. I want to thank all of you for supporting this book for all these years... and hopefully for the years to come.

Dear Mr. K I really like the character The Immortal, he is one of my favorite supporting cast members. The bits about his past that you showed in his origin story really interest me, even more knowing he was Abe Lincoln. I was wondering though, do you ever plan to do a solo one-shot about the Immortal?

Love the book & can’t wait to see more.

Joseph Compton
Cedar park, Texas.

Another Immortal vote? Wowzers!

If you people knew how much I ALREADY want to do this you’d understand why it’s so frustrating to get these letters. I DON’T HAVE TIME!!

Hey guys,

Great Great series, great book. Been a reader since issue one. I have wanted the whole Eve-Invincible thing since issue #1. I would like to see you kill her off now though. I haven’t wrote to a comic in 15 years, but I have to voice my opinion on this. I guess you don’t really have to kill her, although I’m sure a Viltrumite would do it for this. Send her back to back to Africa, anything to get her out of the book. It has nothing to do with any Pro-choice/ Pro-Life debate. I just think what Eve did is wrong. I had a kid at 15, which was hard. No one would help & it was my families general opinion that I had done something to them. I never backed away from my responsibilities for a minute. Yet here is a well off young girl with a guy who obviously will literally die for her & she doesn’t even tell him she’s pregnant. Waits till he’s off the planet & may die to (insert P.C. term here) the only part of him that would be left in the universe. Does anyone have any idea how many widows of soldiers in Iraq & Afghanistan would kill to have a piece of their husbands left behind like that. To beat it all,

when he comes back alive, she tells him after the fact. How does that help anyone but her? The fact he didn't punch a hole in her chest escapes me. If she wasn't going to involve him in the decision or even bother telling him she was ever pregnant, why make him shoulder her burden afterwards. Please just get her out of the book now, I really don't think I can enjoy the book with her in it anymore.

Sincerely,
Michael Benton

You're entitled to your opinion. I have no desire to get in the middle of this conversation, but I will give you this minor spoiler: Eve's not leaving for some time.

Eve is here to stay, Michael. We'll be dealing with repercussions of this storyline for years to come. Sorry you don't approve, but I make no claims that this book will appeal to everyone at all times. I hope that the rest of the book remains interesting enough to keep you around.

Dear Kirkman,

Thank you, thank you, THANK YOU, for touching on the issue of abortion. I am SO relieved and surprised that you not only chose to have Eve get an abortion, but I am also grateful that you actually brought up the subject in 79 and flat out said it! (not just beat around the bush) Being a 23 year old woman, and with all the political abortion "BS" going on, it is good to actually see someone have the balls to use such a touchy subject in their work. (Especially a work such as Invincible which, I imagine, has a following age close to my own.) I am so stoked that there will be no Invincible baby (seeing heads rip off is WAY cooler) and I'm even more stoked that you brought a realistic, relatable situation to your fans. Mad props and respect from this lady, mad props.

Thanks again and keep up the good work!

Heather B.
North Hollywood, CA

P.S. In real life, I'm an Eve look-a-like (pre-preggo). No relevance here, just bragging ;-)
Thanks for finding the book! I personally think Robert is better than about 74% of the writers above (what, I'm not gonna stroke his ego and say the whole list!).

You kind of are bragging... Eve (pre or post-preggo) is a bona fide hottie.

74% Not even a full three quarters?! When you say you're not gonna stroke my ego-you're not kidding!

You did it. I read it and said, "Aw crap." You don't pull punches, Robert, I'll give you that. What kids don't realize when they make the decision to destroy another human life is the scars it leaves on them emotionally. Yeah, Eve and Mark did a lot of panels of crying after her revelation. I appreciate your writing ability and have for some time. I actually tell my non comic reading friends how awesome you are.

Now don't skimp on me. This is a big deal. I know you know this is a big deal. I really hope you show how Eve deals with the emotional ramifications of her actions as well as you do anything else. If anyone can show emotional trauma in a comic its you, Ryan, and FCO and company.

I'm not happy with the abortion angle. I hate it. It tears at me morally and emotionally. I will never ever approve of an abortion EVER, but you write darn good fiction. Oliver almost dying made me feel a bit grim. Mark about getting his head smashed in the War even made my heart beat a little faster. Eve's revelation made my write my first letter to a comic book and I've been reading comics for 20 some odd years. I am even a little mad at her to be honest. That's how good your stuff is. I'm angry. Not at you. At her. Me and my wife have been trying to conceive the last few years; maybe that's why it made me so pissed and disappointed in Eve. Adoption is an option. And just making her chubbier as a consequence? Not sure how I feel about that one but not all women are slim, trim, and busty.

At any rate, I will continue to read because if anyone can write great Superhero fiction and make me feel not only admiration at such an awesome job, but also, pain, anger, and disappointment at fictional characters, its you Mr. Robert Kirkman. You continue to knock my socks off. Please, do not disappoint me. That's a real please, not like an order or anything.

Tim Cotrell

Again, not touching this debate with a ten-foot pole, but we appreciate your decision to stick with the book, and your faith in Robert to tell his story.

Yes, and please take note, this wasn't a publicity stunt or an attempt at taking one side or another. I just want to show Eve and Mark dealing with something real in a real way. They'll be dealing with this for a long time... rest assured. This will impact a lot of things. This wasn't just done for shock value. There's a plan here.

Hey guys,

Finally caught up and started buying the single issues and 79 was my first single issue purchase!!!

You will get a ton of mail on this, but I gots to say I think it is more likely Atom Eve would have miscarried fighting crime in Mark's absence. Really. Seriously. Robert Kirkman makes the choices he does, for justified reasons, but...

I'm just saying. Thanks for the wonderful comic.

Dan Piercy
Columbus, OH

Okay, now THIS is one we could be allowed to tackle/ make jokes of... Robert?

Sure, Sina. Go for it.

Okay, here I go:

Ehhn, I don't have jokes... but a counter response would be:

Why would a flying chick who uses her mind to fight people miscarry? It's not

like she's a roller-skating gang member who gets kicked in the gut during a tense standoff at a roller rink (whoever gets this reference wins a Skybound special something or another).

PS - I dislike Dupli-Kate's new hairstyle for the last couple of issues.

Me-ow! Claws out, Dan!

Should we invite Dan to take over? I think he might be better at this than me. Better haircuts and miscarriages instead of abortions... I'm glad he wrote in.

Dear Invincible Crew,
I am one of the elusive, rarely caught on film, female comic book geeks. I know most boys think we only read Fables and Buffy, both of which I love, but I was sucked into the Invincible world soon after the start. I have to admit I've always been a chick more up for the action/scifi flicks than a sappy romcom but invincible has always struck a nice balance between the two. The storylines have always harkened back to what excited everyone about Spiderman back in the day. An awkward kid that never quite knew how to get the girl, be popular or balance a family life but could rip your arm off if you got to the chocolate pudding first in the lunch line. Then you get the added factor that Dad and half of your DNA code wants to ruthlessly wipeout anything in its path including your home world. Great stuff! I even like the gore. Crazy I know.

Now that I've expressed my love for, almost, all things Invincible here's where I'm not a happy comic book geek girl. The cover for issue 79 is a crying shame. When I picked up the issue I thought either the story line had jumped forward in time or Eve had done some serious treadmill action. Neither was the case. To have her on the cover as "Skinny Eve" and to have her on the inside as her more rubenesque self is insulting especially when Mark actually likes the change and compliments her for her ample curves. Their relationship has always felt real and supportive and is what keeps the title so human even with all the fights, gore and destruction going on within its pages. It's such a wasted opportunity to promote a great storyline on the inside and strip it away on the cover.

Like most comic book lovers the allure of relating to characters on an emotional level and also seeing the amazing worlds and things they can do is hard to resist. For girls this is a little harder. For every Wonder Woman and Storm there are a bevy of mindless females that don't bring much to the overall image than a skimpy costume. Eve is more than that. Eve is just as powerful as Mark and has always been his equal, if not surpassing him, intellectually. I've always connected with Eve, beyond the point of our shared red hair, in her headstrong, sweet, smart and goofy ways. Then please, please, please don't make girls feel like they have to be skinny to be on the cover of a comic. Be the ones to show a different side of the female comic book world and embrace the ample and curvy differences that are out there.

If Eve's good enough to be curvy on the inside of an issue she's, damn well, good enough to be curvy on the outside.

Viva la Cheeseburger,
Heather O'Hara

While your points are valid- and awesome- they don't quite match up with Robert's intentions for what happened on the cover.

We have to produce these covers months in advance, and they are seen by fans way before the book hits the stands. Eve gaining weight was meant to be a surprise, so if you knew she'd put on pounds last fall, it would have had zero impact when you read the pages.

Don't worry, a larger and in-charger Eve will show up on the covers soon enough.

Yeah, and just to be clear--you're absolutely right. Having her thin on the cover is COMPLETE BULLSHIT. So, sorry about that. Certainly, it wasn't our intention to have her be thinner to sell books or anything. If there had been time, we could have had Ryan redraw Eve, but yeah... I decided it would be best to just leave it as is and get the book on time faster.

She'll be on the cover in her current form very soon, I promise.

P.S. Why is there not a monthly Hector Plasm? That comic's so great and distinctive from the story lines to Nate's art. I've passed those, oh so few books, onto every friend I know and they always ask "where can I get more!" Nate's art for the Eve mini and the Walking Dead crossover were just great. Please get Hector out there. I occasionally have an angelic gunslinger and a devilish beatnik with me. Don't make me listen to the beatnik and curse Image/Skybound for not putting out more Hector. He's very persuasive even with the beret.

That's a question for Image Comics, there may already be a post in their FAQ about it!

No, I'll handle this one. Benito and Nate, the creators of Hector Plasm are both, frankly, not as dedicated to the craft of comics-making as they should be. I hate to call out two of my friends and most ardent supporters over the years but here's the thing... they OWE THE WORLD more Hector Plasm. They've got enough material to make that a monthly book that would be as interesting and compelling at issue 100 as it would be at issue 1... and to be honest, I fear we'll never see so much as one more issue of that book... and that pisses me off.

Guys... we all want more Hector Plasm! For the love of pete, stop watching Dancing with the Stars and get some Hector Plasm done.

We also hope you got a chance to visit us at the Skybound booth at Comic-Con, where we unveiled a new Invincible shirt, and a Science Dog shirt, too boot!

Adios!

S

I never did get Robert Downey Jr's autograph... oh well, next year!

- Robert Kirkman

In the end, the only person
you can really count on is yourself!



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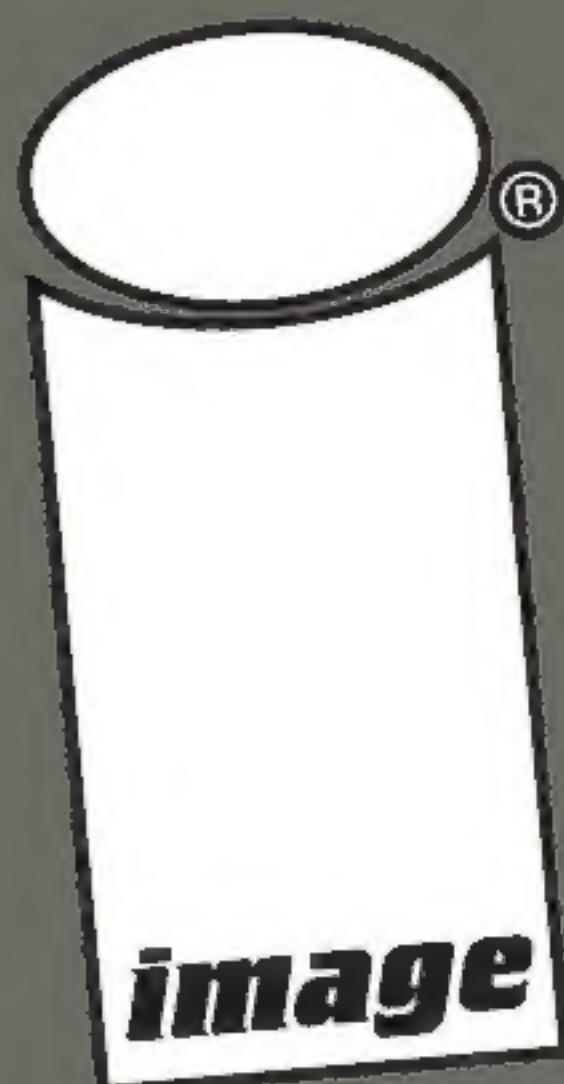
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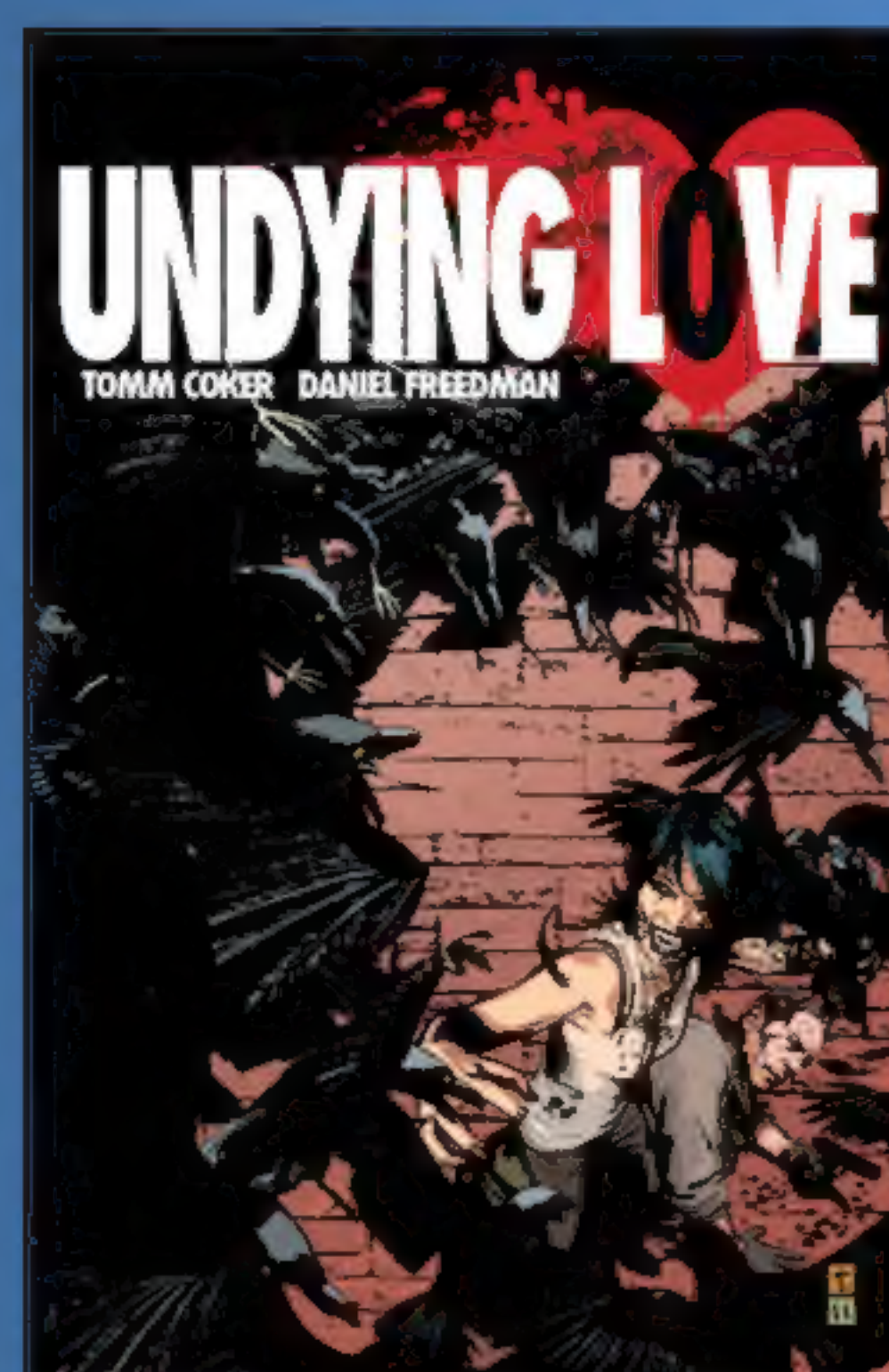
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